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ECO Seeks Participation in UN General Assembly

LD1103114793 Tehran IRNA in English 1115 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] United Nations, New York, March 11, IRNA—Member countries of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) have asked the U.N. to pave the ground for the participation of the organization's representative in the sessions of the General Assembly as an observer.

Representatives of the organization, grouping Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Afghanistan and six Central Asian countries, signed an application for ECO's membership Wednesday [10 March].

The request is to be submitted to the General Assembly by secretary-general, Butrus Butrus-Ghali.

In his last year report to the Security Council, Butrus-Ghali called for the expansion of U.N. cooperation with regional organizations.

The Security Council confirmed this issue late last month in a press release and called on all regional organisations and institutions to introduce their representatives to expand their ties with the U.N.

Under the status quo, ECO member countries would not have a bureau at the U.N. but current chairman of the ministerial meetings, Pakistan, will represent the organisation at the U.N.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Morocco Signs Cooperation Accord With OADIM

LD1103154893 Rabat MAP in English 1338 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Rabat, Mar. 11 (MAP)—The accord on the headquarters of the Rabat-based Arab Industrial and Mineral Development Organization (OADIM) was signed here Wednesday [10 March] by Moroccan Minister of Commerce, Industry and Privatization Moulay Zine Zahidi and by OADIM Secretary General Mohamed Karbit.

The accord provides for the advantages, immunity and facilities to be extended to the Arab organization to help it carry out its activities and reach its objectives.

The OADIM seeks to promote coordination and industrial complementarity between Arab countries and to improve the capacities of the Arab nation in the realms of industry, energy, mining....

Palestinian Affairs

Arabs May Go To Negotiations Without Palestinians

NC1103153393 Paris AFP in English 1442 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Damascus, March 11 (AFP)—Arab negotiators could go back to Middle East peace talks next month without the Palestinians, who rejected an invitation because of the deportees, a senior PLO official said Thursday [11 March].

Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO's political department, said the other Arab delegations could "resume the negotiation without the Palestinians for one or two sessions to test the intentions of the United States and Israel."

He added that the Palestinians had not definitively ruled out a return to the talks with Israel but that the "PLO prefers to solve the problem of the expulsions before going to Washington."

The Palestine Liberation Organisation is excluded from the talks but directs the Palestinian delegation, which Wednesday refused to accept an invitation from the United States and Russia to attend the ninth round starting April 20 in Washington.

Spokeswoman Hanan 'Ashrawi said the problem of the 400 Palestinian deportees stranded in south Lebanon must be resolved.

Israel must also pledge to end its expulsions policy, she said, a demand dismissed as "childish and unrealistic" by Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin on Thursday in London.

Qaddumi told AFP it would be "difficult to resume the talks if things remain unchanged" and that "the deportees must return home."

The PLO suspended Palestinian participation in the talks after the December 17 expulsions.

"We are trying to coordinate with the other Arab parties," he said after talks with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam.

Al-Shar' and Qaddumi have proposed holding a meeting of the Arab participants in the bilaterals—Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians—plus Egypt before the end of the month.

At the deportee camp, spokesman 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi welcomed the Palestinian rejection of the invitation.

Al-Rantisi, a leader of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) which opposes the talks, said the rejection "is in line with the feelings of the Palestinian people, who reject the peace process in its entirety because of continued repression in the occupied territories."

Qaddumi Said To Fail To Change Syrian Positions

NC1103135393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1255 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Tunis, 11 Mar (MENA)—The Tunisian paper AL-SHURUQ reports today that the talks held by PLO Political Department head Faruq Qaddumi with Syrian

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' in Damascus have not achieved the several results that the Palestinian wanted.

Citing responsible PLO sources, the paper added that Qaddumi wanted the Syrian leadership to set a date for the meeting of the cordon states before Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's visit to the United States. Qaddumi sought this in order to adopt a united Arab stand that would pressure the U.S. Administration and the Israeli Government to speed up a solution to the deportees issue and commit Israel to pledge to repeal the policy of deportation.

The paper adds that the Palestinian leadership was aware of Syria's intention to postpone the cordon states' meeting until after the Ramadan 'Id holidays.

The responsible sources also said that Qaddumi failed to convince al-Shar' to speed up the meeting and hold it prior to Rabin's visit to Washington next week, and that he also failed to set with al-Shar' a specific date for the meeting after Ramadan.

The sources added that it is probable that the reason for the Syrian lack of eagerness to hold the meeting could be Syria's estimation that the next round of the negotiations will be of particular importance regarding solving the Golan problem, in addition to Damascus' belief that Rabin's visit to Washington will help contribute to a U.S.-Israeli formula that will constitute a settlement of the Golan issue.

The sources revealed that Faruq Qaddumi raised during his meeting with al-Shar' the issue of developing Palestinian-Syrian relations and proposed that Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat visit Damascus for talks with President al-Asad to remove the misunderstanding that arose between them last October following the Palestinian president's remarks that "there are Syrian intentions to conclude a separate solution with Israel." The sources noted that al-Shar' did not give a specific promise to Qaddumi on this proposal and told him that the matter will be discussed with President al-Asad because it concerns him personally.

The paper goes on to say that Qaddumi is expected to meet during his stay in Damascus with the 10 Palestinian factions that are opposed to the Middle East peace process and will discuss with them ways for them to participate in an expanded meeting of the Palestinian leadership in Tunisia to discuss the deportees problem and the Palestinian issue developments.

Citing Palestinian opposition sources in Amman, AL-SHURUQ adds that this meeting, which will be the third of its kind in less than six months, is not expected to make any progress due to the accumulated and longstanding disputes between these factions and the PLO leadership in Tunisia.

Qaddumi Meeting With Damascus Factions Reported

JN1103184793 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] At the request of a PLO Executive Committee delegation comprising Faruq Qaddumi and Muhammad Ghunaym, a meeting was held with the delegation last night. The meeting was attended by Khalid al-Fahum, chairman of the Palestinian National Salvation Front; 'Isam al-Qadi, secretary general of the Organization of the Vanguards of the Popular Liberation Struggle, al-Sa'iqah Forces; Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC]; as well as Talal Naji and 'Umar al-Shihabi, members of the PFLP-GC Political Bureau.

After the meeting, Khalid al-Fahum made the following statement: The conferees have discussed and assessed the current political state of affairs regarding the Palestine question and the deportee issue. The PLO Executive Committee delegation was informed of the need for the Palestinian negotiating team to withdraw from both the bilateral and multilateral talks. Besides, we affirmed the need to adhere to the implementation of Security Council Resolution 799, which provides for the repatriation of the deportees. We also underscored the need to reject any bargaining, any compromise solutions on the aforesaid resolution, or any attempts, for that matter, at circumventing this resolution.

Khalid al-Fahum added: The PLO Executive Committee delegation informed us that the PLO Executive Committee has decided to boycott the multilateral talks, and that the head of the PLO Political Department sent official letters to the Arab League and the Arab states participating in these negotiations, asking them to boycott the multilateral talks. Thanks to this stand, the round of multilateral talks scheduled to have been held on 9 February did not convene, the PLO Executive Committee delegation noted.

U.S. Interests in Talks, Mideast Viewed

LD1103233993 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Station Commentary]

[Text] Brothers, American intentions usually are clear when the American politicians talk to each other, especially when the policy they are discussing deals with questions involving allocations of funds or aid. These intentions are not so clear when they address others. When the Americans address others, the political statements of the major superpower in the world tend to be presented in the form of political stands and preaching on ethics. But when they address one another the interests become manifested so clearly. They tend to prefer some policies to others when they are driven by self-interest and not by standards and values. At the hearing to give evidence before the Senate appropriations committee the U.S. Secretary of State for Middle East Affairs Edward Djerejian explained the U.S. strategic view of the Middle East area as well as the interests that motivate the American arrangements in the area.

Djerejian said that realizing peace between Arabs and Israel would serve American interests. He implied that an end to the conflict will help to serve American interests in the entire region. It will also help to put a damper on political and religious extremism. He affirmed that the American aim behind the current political process is to secure the signing of peace agreements between any Arab states and Israel so that it would be extremely difficult for any new regime to go back on such agreements in the future.

Djerejian on the other hand renewed the American absolute undertaking to maintain the Israeli superiority in the area. He affirmed that this undertaking goes beyond the question of arms to embrace much more important things like training, intelligence gathering, and the military defensive doctrine which would be supported by military capabilities.

If we removed from the speech all the things that touch the interests as Djerejian had done, the American stance on the peace talks between the sides in the area of the Middle East becomes quite clear. Stability will be realized under prevailing conditions in the area and they must be maintained to safeguard the American interest. As for Israel, its relationship with the United States assumes a new depth which guarantees its military superiority over all the states of the areas.

Here we pause to ask: Why is there this keen desire to maintain Israel's military superiority over all the states of the area—both Arabs and non Arabs—if a comprehensive and lasting peace has been established in the area?

American interests require that the American Administration concentrates on the need to maintain the continuation of the peace process. This is why it is about to send invitations to attend the 9th round without paying any attention to the Palestinian position which calls for implementation of international legality by applying UN Security Council Resolution 799. It is also beginning to intensify pressure on the Palestinian side to make it attend. This is done by hinting that a Syrian-Israeli agreement is about to be concluded as if Syria is only interested in a separate deal like the Camp David accord.

Anyone who looks after the interests of one side only cannot be a sponsor. The sponsor should be neutral as much as possible. This sponsor should see matters through the eyes of the two side and not one side only. In the end we must draw the necessary conclusions and convey to the world a clear Palestinian position based on the Palestinian view and not on the basis of how others see it as some are trying to do.

Invitations Termed 'Pressure' by U.S. on Arabs

TA1103150493 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 11 Mar 93 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "The Ninth Round and the Forgotten Proposals"]

[Text] Before the cordon states could meet and before any joint Arab stance on the ninth round of negotiations had been determined, the United States and Russia, cosponsors of the peace conference, rushed to set the date of this round—20 April—and handed over the relative invitations to the parties concerned.

Meanwhile, our Palestinian side is insisting on a settlement of the deportee issue before participating in this round, standing apart in its declared position, without being able to rely in advance on a presumed joint Arab stance.

Nevertheless, the opportunity is still available to Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and the PLO to at least meet at the foreign minister level to discuss this new development and agree on a joint stance regarding the deportee issue and the six U.S. points proposed by Warren Christopher during his visit to the region. Although the Israeli Government has rejected those points, one can raise them again now and exert pressure for their implementation before entering the ninth round's negotiating rooms.

Obviously, Palestinian diplomacy is currently intensifying its efforts toward this end at a time when Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, is in Damascus and is continuing his talks with high-ranking Syrian officials. Another Palestinian delegation, headed by Mahmud 'Abbas, arrived yesterday in Cairo carrying a message from president Yasir 'Arafat to Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, dealing necessarily with the latest developments and the fast breaking events relating to this issue.

If by hastening to present the invitations to the ninth round and setting its date officially, Washington is trying to exert pressure on all the Arab parties without any concern even to the proposals of its own secretary of state, an Arab-Palestinian move to establish "minimal" joint coordination between the Arab parties concerned and the PLO will relieve this pressure immensely and will prevent dealing with each party separately.

PLO Seeking To Include 2 in Talks Delegation

NC1103194393 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 3 Mar 93 p 1

[Text] Cairo, AL-DIYAR—Informed Palestinian sources in Egypt said the PLO is currently seeking the United States' and Israel's consent to change the Palestinian delegation to the bilateral talks, allowing two PLO members to join the delegation in the ninth round.

The sources said the PLO links its acceptance of the U.S. plan on a gradual return of the Palestinian deportees, which U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher supported during his recent tour of the region, with the acceptance of its demand to include PLO members in the negotiating delegation.

The Palestinian delegation told Christopher that Israel's decision to lift the ban on contacts with the PLO is Israel's implicit consent to the participation of PLO members in the current negotiations process.

'Arafat Gets 'Important Message' From Mitterrand

LD1003202693 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Text] The brother president Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] today received an important message from French President Francois Mitterrand in reply to the message sent to him by brother Abu-'Ammar concering the deteriorating conditions in the occupied territories and finding a solution to the problem of the Palestinian deportees.

In his message President Mitterrand expressed anxiety at the deterioration in conditions in the occupied territories, especially in the Gaza Strip, the escalation of the acts of violence, and the tragic increase in the number of deaths and injuries. He said that at France's initiative, the EC has urged the Israeli Government to call on the law enforcement bodies to show restraint and to respect international law. The French president expressed the hope that a just and equitable solution will be found for the problem of the Palestinian deportees, which has contributed to the aggravation of the situation, within the framework of UN Security Council Resolution 799.

Palestinian Deportee Spokesman Backs Iran, Not 'Arafat

LD1003221693 Tehran IRNA in English 1814 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Text] East Lebanon, March 10, IRNA—Shaykh 'Abdallah Shami, spokesman of the group of Palestinians banished by the Zionist usurpers to the occupied Lebanese border strip, said Palestinians prided themselves in being attached to the Islamic Republic [Iran] which, he said, condemns compromise of principles and psycho-cultural set-backs. Asked to comment on PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat's criticism of Iran's support for Islamists in occupied Palestine, he said reliance on Iran as the base of Islam is a lot more dignifying than reliance on the Camp David, as 'Arafat has done.

The Palestinian spokesman said that the return of the group to their homeland would mark their eventual victory over the Zionist regime which, he said, would be possible only when all nations and Islamic movements make a concerted effort against the plots of the U.S.

Algeria

Security Forces Detain 'Terrorist Group' in Blida

LD1003182093 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Text] The security forces in Blida have recently put an end to the activities of a terrorist group which was active in the Meftah region, Blida Province. The group consisted of six people and was collecting money and information, making contacts and providing assistance to terrorists. The group has been placed under preventive detention. It has also been accused of attacking the headquarters of the civil security in Meftah and killing a citizen called Amar Bouzdira.

Still in Blida, it was learned today from sources in the province that three policemen were wounded when terrorists opened fire on them. A citizen was also hit during that incident which occurred in the city of Blida near El Soumaa. Yesterday the chairman of the executive delegation [appointed local government body] escaped an assassination attempt.

Army's Role in Defense of 'National Cause'

LD1003224793 Algiers APS in English 1036 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Text] Algiers, 10/03/93 (APS)—General Touati estimated in an analysis to be released on March [word indistinct] of the people in the magazine "EL-DJEICH" [word indistinct] People's National Army (ANP) that the "dissuassive attitude of the ANP towards all the forces, groups, individuals or factions, tempted to accede to power out of the constitutional order or in spite of the national forces, should favour the research of a way of stability of the state's institutions". [sentence as received]

In his reflexion, General Touati recalled the ANP historical mission and analyzed the part which is imparted to it in this "fundamental step in the consolidation of the destiny of Algeria as a modern nation". In his analysis on interrogations raised by the different components of the society on the perception by the army of the existing stakes, the author estimated that "if the ANP perceives, may be better, the irreversible scope of stakes and acts consequently this is due to three reasons. First of all the ANP responsibles are among those who present the best impregnation [as received] of November [1954] values for an ideal of progress and shows better the Algerian sensitization through its human component. The third reason comes from the very nature of its hierarchical organization, doomed and destined to the preservation of the nation and the defence of the national community."

The author recalled the the painful events lived these last years by Algeria and asked if the ANP has not failed to its duty and to its vocation by not reacting to dangers and troubles threatening the civil peace. "The People's National Army resolutely answered to what was expected from it, by reestablishing calm in the country, safeguarding then the state and the institutions", General Touati noted. Insisting that: "In the crucial and sometimes painful context still prevailing, it continues to fulfill its duties".

After having recalled violence prevailing in societies of right and the modern states, Touati reaffirmed that "the only ideal that the ANP is to serve, is the ideal of the unconditional faithfulness to the nation and the national state". General Touati noted that the raison d'etre (of the ANP) is merging with the imperative of defence of the national cause.

Security Services Activities Since 5 Dec

LD1103143493 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] APS has published the results of activities carried out by the police, gendarmerie, and Army forces since 5 December, the date of enforcing the curfew system. Information about this result is included in a report by Amal Meddah:

[Meddah] The police, national gendarmerie services, and the special units of the national Army continue the operation of dismantling the terrorist networks in the capital, Algiers province, Blida, Medea, Tipaza, Ain Defla, Boumerdes, and Bouira. These are the provinces in which the situation is considered hot due to the number of recorded crimes and acts of sabotage.

Gendarmerie, Army, and police personnel have, since the imposition of the curfew on 5 December, killed 85 terrorists, wounded another 10 during the search operations, and also arrested more than 700 people for carrying out assassinations, acts of sabotage, instigating violence, and possessing weapons or trading in them.

These statistics have been compiled by APS, which added that during the period the number of victims among the ranks of the forces for maintaining order reached 19 among the police, 19 among the gendarmerie—6 of them wounded—and 2 among the Army. It is noticed that a number of retired people are among the victims.

As far as the civilian ranks are concerned, 18 deaths and 10 injuries have been recorded as victims of terrorist acts. On the other hand, 6 robbery operations took place in public and private institutions during which a sum of 105 million centimes were stolen under the threat of arms.

During the same period, 500 weapons, including machine guns, automatic weapons, and hunting rifles have been recovered. Other weapons have also been recovered in eastern Algeria, where an investigation that started in Setif in December has enabled the dismantling of the largest network for trading in arms in Algeria. The same operation allowed for apprehending 700 people and recovering 842 weapons.

In another large operation, and after investigations lasting for about a year, the security services succeeded in arresting Yakhlef Cherrati, former imam of (?La Montagne) mosque in El-Harrach, one of the leaders of the Armed Islamic Movement [al-Harakah al-Islamiyah al-Musallahah] and one of [Armed Islamic Movement leader Abdel Kader] Chebouti's assistants.

On 4 February, the national human rights monitoring group had announced that of the total of 600 dead since the beginning of 1992, there are 150 victims belonging to the security services. According to some sources, about 1,000 persons are still in the security centers.

Repatriation of Malian Citizens Commences 6 Mar

LD0803115493 Algiers APS in English 1052 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Tamanrasset, 08/03/93 (APS)—A preparatory meeting for the voluntary return of displaced persons from Malian origin living in the south of Algeria started Saturday in Tamanrasset (2000 kms south of Algiers).

This meeting, attended by Malian experts, the representative of coordination of Movements and Unified Fronts of Azaoued (MUFA) and the Algerian side, is held following to decisions announced in the plan of action, signed in the Malian capital (Bamako) on last February 7.

During this meeting, lists of displaced persons living in the the extreme South Wilayate (provinces) (Illizi, Tamanrasset and Adrar) and who want to return voluntarily to their origin country, will be updated.

This preparatory meeting is one of the phases of implementation of the plan of action relating to the return and the social and economic reinsertion of displaced populations from Malian origin living in Algeria.

A campaign of sensitization and explanation of decisions of the tripartite protocol of accord (Algeria, Mali and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD], signed in Tamanrasset on last December 23, and the plan of action signed in Bamako on last February 7, will start in the coming days throughout the camps of displaced persons from Malian origin situated in Tamanrasset and its surroundings.

It is worth recalling that the plan of action signed on last February in Bamako between Mali, Algeria and IFAD, provides for a pilot operation.

In this context, a series of measures were defined by the two sides (Mali and Algeria) so as to start the operation of repatriation.

On another turn, the Algerian and Malian governments agreed on the participation of UN agencies, non-governmental humanitarian organizations in order to help them to take in charge the operation of transfer of populations.

Egypt

Mubarak Threatens Strike Against Sudan Over Iran Ships

NC1103173693 Paris AFP in English 1702 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, March 11 (AFP) - President Husni Mubarak has warned Khartoum that Egypt would strike immediately if Iranian warships were allowed to use Port Sudan, the Egyptian Gazette reported on Thursday [11 March].

Mubarak, speaking at a meeting on Wedneday, said he had heard recently that Iranian navy ships might be allowed to use the port, which lies 100 kilometres (60 miles) south of the Hala'ib border region disputed by the two neighbours.

"I sent them a warning against this action because it is related directly to Egypt's security and I will not tolerate anything which threatens Egypt's security," he said.

"I said I will strike at them immediately," he said, in a reference to any Iranian ships that docked.

Relations between Egypt and Sudan began to deteriorate after an Islamic military junta took power in Khartoum in June 1989, and worsened during the Gulf crisis when Sudan supported Iraq.

Mubarak already warned Sudan against allowing Iraq to deploy missiles on its territory during the Gulf War.

More on Mubarak Threats

NC1203142993 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 11 Mar 93 pp 1, 3

[Report by 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Yarqani]

[Excerpts] President Husni Mubarak yesterday visited Cairo Governorate, where he was briefed on plans to develop the capital, its replanning, and civic planning for new areas. [passage omitted]

President Mubarak touched on the Palestinian deportees issue. He said: The majority of them are from Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], but we are defending a cause and a principle. Even though we know about their links with Iran, they attacked us strongly, and even though Iran wants to impose its hegemony on the region, we have made great efforts and endeavors to resolve the deportees issue and bring about their return so that the peace process can continue and stability in the region be achieved.

Regrettably, Iran does not want peace. It does not want the issue resolved. It wants to eliminate the State of Israel and rejects the negotiations. I say let us be realistic. We tried this procedure for many years, and we must talk in the language of the era. The world is united today against terrorism. Regrettably, we Muslims have harmed ourselves and have made the world look at the Muslim as a killer. Issues are resolved by deeds, not through zeal. God has given us brains and wisdom and our decisions should stem from them.

The president declared that the current peace process is the last available train passing through the region that can resolve the issue. If this train departs, then God alone knows when the next train will come, particularly as the entire world is full of problems and there are fears that the superpowers will move on to resolve others' problems if the problems in this region appear unresolvable.

We have an opportunity with [Israeli Prime Minister] Yitzhaq Rabin because he differs completely from [former Prime Minister] Yitzhaq Shamir. It is true that negotiations with Israel are not easy, but they are not impossible. We have had success in this respect, and what is required is only to let reason prevail.

The president then turned to the Hala'ib issue. He said: The issue is this. Whenever there is a politically-weak government in Sudan, it opens the file of the Hala'ib problem. This was done by [former Sudanese President] 'Abdallah Khalil with [former Egyptian President] 'Abd-al-Nasir, [Islamic Front leader] al-Turabi during the rule of [former Sudanese President Ja'far] al- Numayri with [former Egyptian President Anwar] al-Sadat, and [former Sudanese Prime Minister] al-Sadiq al-Mahdi when he stopped work in our phosphate plants in 1985 at a time when Egypt was going through a severe economic crisis, but I did not pay attention to it.

Then came [Revolutionary Command Council Chairman] 'Umar al-Bashir, whom we have helped and supported. He is attacking us violently today and wants me to reply. But I will not be pushed into this issue.

Of course, we will not fight Sudan. The Sudanese people are our brothers, and we have more than 4 million Sudanese here. But I recently heard about bringing [al-ityan] Iranian naval units for deployment in Port Sudan Harbor. I sent them a warning against such an action, because this has a direct bearing on Egypt's security and I will not tolerate anything that threatens Egypt's security. I said that I would strike at them immediately.

We have heard such threats before about missiles that can hit Aswan Dam, but based on our knowledge, we did not pay any attention to them. I was eager this time, however, to make my warning clear and public.

On U.S. aid and the possibility of it being cut off, President Mubarak said: I believe that aid will not be affected this year. But we must realize that it is not permanent and might be affected after one or two years and its volume reduced. We must not be dependent on this aid continuing.

I have, in fact, given instructions to Defense Minister Husayn Tantawi regarding military aid so we have alternatives and our defensive capability is not affected. Similar instructions have been sent at the same time to various state departments to take economic developments into account. [passage omitted].

Mubarak Stresses 'Confrontation' Capability

NC1203113593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1000 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Report on an interview with President Husni Mubarak by Bibi al-Marzuq, chairman of the board of Kuwait's AL-ANBA' newspaper; place and date not given]

[Text] Kuwait, 12 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has affirmed that Egypt's position on the Gulf crisis was based on moral principles and adherence to the joint Arab Defense Agreement. He pointed out that the Egyptian Army only goes outside the country in order to defend a just cause and for clear national and pan-Arab objectives. He said that Egypt did not participate in the Kuwait liberation operation or decide to display solidarity with it out of financial greed. It did not ask Kuwait or any foreign country for anything. Mubarak added: "We entered the war because of moral motivations and a commitment to principles. I reject what is being said—that we participated in the fighting to liberate Kuwait for money."

This came in an interview Mubarak granted to the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-ANBA', which will be published tomorrow.

Mubarak affirmed that Egypt will support any Arab state that demands assistance. It also will support any state that faces aggression, as happened with Kuwait. He pointed out that this option derives its legitimacy first from Egyptian principles, and second from the joint Arab Defense Agreement, irrespective of whether there was a Damascus Declaration.

President Mubarak said: "We did not propose the Damascus Declaration, but this in no way means that we are dodging our Arab commitments." He added: "The Damascus Declaration does not interest me. What interests me are the principles. These principles commit me to assist any state that requests such assistance. I support any Arab state that faces aggression—and immediately."

In the interview, which was conducted by Bibi al-Marzuq, AL-ANBA' chairman of the board, President Mubarak criticized some statements regarding the Damascus Declaration, including those made by Kuwaiti National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Sa'dun during his recent visit to Cairo.

Mubarak said: "Such statements hurt our national dignity."

Asked why some states use the Damascus Declaration as an excuse to settle scores with Kuwait and why other states, like Iran, oppose the Declaration, President Mubarak said: Iran wants to appropriate and control the entire Gulf region. Everybody knows this. Undoubtedly, the struggle between Iran and Iraq is one over control of the Gulf region.

On the Middle East peace process, President Mubarak affirmed that Egypt wants to achieve peace, indicating that it makes constructive and positive efforts toward this end. He said the peace train passing through the region is the last and if we don't catch it now, we will never catch it. The world will tolerate our problems no longer.

President Mubarak said the issue of the Palestinian deportees is one of the problems, but explained that it should not halt the peace process. He advised everyone to continue the peace talks until a just peace is established in the whole region.

President Mubarak said that terrorism is a global phenomenon. There is no state immune from terrorism and that includes the advanced states. He said the recent explosion in New York proves this and added that the world needs to confront the phenomenon.

Asked about reports of threats against investors in Egypt, President Mubarak said these are mere "fireworks" [farqa'ah], empty words that no reasonable person could utter.

President Mubarak criticized media that exaggerate events in Egypt. He described the terrorists as "a group of criminals and outlaws." He said most of them had been in Afghanistan, where each would receive $1,500 a month. When military operations ceased in Afghanistan, they began to search for other sources of work and finance. They found their goal in Iran, but Tehran does not give them much. They move between Iran and Sudan and from Sudan to Egypt.

President Mubarak said some terrorist elements have been living under the patronage of rich countries and that those countries will be seared by the fire of terrorism.

His excellency added: "I know these countries well but will not name them."

Mubarak said Egypt is a democratic country that guarantees freedom of speech and expression, pointing out that if the country's political system were dictatorial, no one would have heard of the Islamist resurgence.

He said: We hear nothing about the Islamist resurgence in some countries, yet it exists there. Those countries deal with such movements with force and immediate extermination.

Asked if he believes that Sudan's ruler al-Bashir and the National Islamic Front leader play a part in inciting against Egypt and planning terrorist acts in it, His Excellency President Mubarak said: I won't name anyone, but I am saying that Egypt can deal with moles ['anasir madsusah] and those who incite. By Egypt, I mean "Egypt the state and the Egypt of the masses." Both oppose profiteering in Islam and intimidating innocent people in the name of Islam.

Asked if Iran has a military presence in Sudan or forces in Port Sudan, President Mubarak said: "No. This is not true. If it were true, I would never remain silent."

His excellency continued: "We are capable of confrontation and know the limits of confrontation. A military presence must not be disregarded or taken lightly. It is a factor that threatens Egyptian national security. In this case, one must act with the logic of accurate calculations: one plus one equals two."

President Mubarak asserted that Egypt opposes Iraq's, Sudan's, or Somalia's partition. He stated: We refuse to have foreign countries partition countries in the Arab world.

President Mubarak remarked that the world is passing through what can be termed the new chaotic order [al-nizam al-fawdawi al-jadid], not the new world order, because the world swarms with chaos in Bosnia-Hercegovina, Somalia, Iraq, and Sudan. The Warsaw Pact has collapsed and the Soviet Union has come apart. He said everything is shaky and no one knows how or on what foundation the world will finally settle.

Asked when the world order will stabilize and wars will end, President Mubarak said: "This needs 10 years at least."

In answer to the Kuwaiti newspaper's astonished query: Ten years?, the president said laughing: "Ten years is not that long."

He added: The Arab countries boycotted Egypt for 10 years without substantial reason. Egypt had harmed no one, committed aggression against no one. All we wanted was to retrieve our territory, exploit the October victory, and reach a settlement. We achieved what we wanted. The others, however, submitted to terrorism and blackmail.

In answer to a question, President Husni Mubarak stated that he has not thought about a third presidential term. He said it is too early to think about this.

At the end of his interview with AL-ANBA', President Mubarak called on Kuwaitis to be united and in harmony with each other, to rally around their leadership, not to give sedition a chance, and not to accept ideas from abroad.

His excellency said he welcomes Kuwaiti investments in Egypt.

Sudanese Leaders Said Trying To 'Provoke' Egypt

NC1203102893 Cairo MENA in English 0946 GMT 12 Mar 93

[From the press review]

[Text] Cairo, 12 Mar (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR said in its editorial that the acts of Chairman of the Sudanese Revolution Command Council Lt. General 'Umar al-Bashir and leader of the Sudanese [National] Islamic Front Hasan al-Turabi no longer surprise anybody.

They abandoned thinking about solutions for Sudan's problems and devoted their efforts to provoke Egypt by whatever means, it said.

The newspaper said in part, "The junta, which is currently ruling Khartoum, has made many attempts to provoke Egypt, its government and people, the beginning was the Hala'ib problem.

"Once Cairo released all that ascertains that the territory belongs to Egypt, and that the Egyptians are not prepared to cede an inch of their territory, al-Turabi and his follower al-Bashir took over the Egyptian education institutes in Khartoum. "However, Egypt responded calmly, the Sudanese junta thought that the coup de grace to Egyptian-Sudanese ties was the closing of the branch of Cairo University in Khartoum. "Instead, the act made Cairo sarcastically smile once again."

Diplomat Heads to Iraq To Assume Post

NC1203100193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0940 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Amman, 12 Mar (MENA)—Rida Nasr 'Abd-al-Karim, counselor at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, left Amman for Baghdad today to assume his post as head of the Egyptian Interests Section in Iraq. India previously handled Egyptian interests in Iraq in the wake of the 1990 Gulf crisis.

Counselor 'Abd-al-Karim told MENA's Amman correspondent that his dispatch to Baghdad follows the Foreign Ministry's decision to establish diplomatic representation in Iraq in order to handle the affairs of Egyptian workers in that country.

He said he hopes the concerned Iraqi authorities will cooperate with him in overcoming obstacles that bar the solution of any problems Egyptian workers face in Iraq.

Counselor 'Abd-al-Karim formerly served at Egyptian diplomatic posts in Prague, Barcelona, Congo, and the United Arab Emirates [UAE].

Arab-Israeli Conflict Said Cause of Terrorism

NC1103171593 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Muhammad Sharaf commentary: "Terrorism as a World Phenomenon and a Regional One in the Middle East"]

[Text] President Husni Mubarak's remarks during his meeting with Cairo Governorate political leaders—that terrorism spoils peace and gives the wrong image of Islam, and that there is a country that claims to be adhering to Islam but is backing terrorism in the region—are noteworthy. Even though terrorism has become a plague that is spreading all over the world, as Mubarak also said in his interview with THE WASHINGTON POST, we will focus our discussion on terrorism as a phenomenon whose danger to the region is increasing in a very noticeable way. Our objective is to expose, objectively, the excuses that propagators of terrorism use to justify these crimes that pose a real threat to the future of the region.

We start by listing the tradional conditions for peace and stability in the Middle East since the 1950s:

1. A fair solution to the Palestinian issue and an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict, which was caused by this problem, manifested in Israel's occupation of Arab territories since 1967.

2. A halt to the arms race in the region and the removal of nuclear weapons from it. The conventional arms race and the possession of weapons of mass destruction are by-products of the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict. They are also the product of the traditional Israeli policy of expansion that the current peace process is designed to end.

Another condition for peace and stability in the region is the creation of an atmosphere to political, economic, and comprehensive social development in the region and at the international level.

These are the recognized conditions for stability and peace in the Middle East. But there is another aspect, one we can safely say has resulted from an absence of a solution to these problems. This aspect is terrorism, which each country in the region must confront. Terrorism is as old as human history and is certainly the product of backwardness. Its root causes must be diagnosed in order to resist and confront it successfully. Since terrorism cannot express itself unless it has the appropriate climate, and since we are talking today about terrorism in the region, we must recognize the fact that a comprehensive, objective analysis clearly shows that terrorism in the Middle East could not have expressed itself openly if it were not for the fact that the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict are still unresolved.

If we analyze the terrorists' allegations, we find that aggression against the Palestinian people and the aggressions against the Arab nation in the past 50 years have given what some deliberately describe as the Islamic fundamentalist movement its strongest justification for the religious extremism that has removed it completely from the true spirit of the tolerant Islamic creed.

We should underline here that the international community has not exerted a real, sincere effort to end the Arab-Israeli conflict on a just basis in the past 50 years. It only began to do so with the with the Madrid conference at the end of 1991. The cold war and the East-West struggle for influence in the region were the main reasons for the continuation of this conflict. We believe that we do not need to search for the logical conclusion of this analysis. Terrorism can be stopped at the regional level only by removing its causes, that is, by establishing a just peace in the region. The experiences of the past have proven that policies of violence and strength are futile. Violence always breeds violence and terrorism breeds terrorism.

This is about regional terrorism. As to terrorism in individual countries, we can only talk about terrorism in Egyptian society. The signs indicate that extremism has reached its limits; the objectives of terrorism have been exposed to the masses. The Egyptian people will certainly not remain idle when they see terrorism strike at the heart of their vital interests and threaten their sources of livelihood. More importantly, terrorism is threatening our infant democracy and social stability. There can be no development or progress without stability. Even though the situation requires vigilance and caution, the masses' confrontation of this abnormal and dangerous phenomenon and their support for the security forces are capable of uprooting this phenomenon.

Arabs, U.S. Blamed for Terrorism

NC1103083293

[Editorial Report] Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic on 7 March publishes on pages 1 and 3 an article of approximately 2,000 words by Chief Editor Mahfuz al-Ansari entitled: "Terrorism Is Not Only for Export: They Created It and Burn in Its Fire."

The writer introduces his article by claiming: "The structures, policies, methods, and laws governing the world and its people in the second half of this century have aged." People and conditions, both of which have changed, cannot accept laws that are drawing their last breath, Al-Ansari maintains, adding: "This creates confrontation and conflict. It could also create tension and a vehemence that eventually expresses itself through violence." Every society, he says, then tries to find justifications to present to the people so that it can "practice, through these ideas, racial, sexual, religious, or sectarian fanaticism with which it can kill or burn foreigners in their homes," he suggests.

Al-Ansari points to the old saying that you shouldn't play with fire, using it to illustrate his belief: "We should pause to contemplate some of these difficult games, especially when they are played by the bodies and institutions of governments in the developed world, such as the United States, France, Britain, the Soviet Union, and others, and those of the Third World, such as the Egypt of al-Sadat, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, Israel, and others."

The writer goes on to say that some governments believed: "Tampering with extremism, terrorism, and religious and doctrinal obsessions could be a safe game, its production limited to export." He then gives examples of leaders who he says played this game in Egypt, such as Former Egyptian President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, King Faruq of Egypt, and Former Egyptian President al-Sadat, who was assassinated by such extremists.

Al-Ansari charges that some countries gave the expelled Islamists political asylum, adding: "This is one thing; encouraging, inciting, financing, preparing, training, and arming them is another." These countries, rich or poor, he believes, "thought that by funding this or that group and expanding the scope of funds—from the inside, the source of the asylum seekers, to the outside, the host country—they could keep the ball in others' court and protect the funding country from harm." He maintains: "They believed that training, receiving, and preparing the armies of the voluntary Muslim Arab youths to fight the United States, instead of a war among Muslims in Afghanistan, could form the nucleus of an army to topple leaders or strike countries against which they have old vendettas." These countries believed, al-Ansari suggests, that "Such a game is safe and guaranteed." He asserts that the richest and most powerful of these countries, Saudi Arabia, faces a crisis in these Islamists. "Discourses distributed by post, hand, or fax crop up everywhere." He then lists organizations that have appeared around the Arab world demanding Islamic change and, he says, that chase people back to their homes.

"Beasts," he believes, "are the result, beasts conditioned, mobilized, financed, trained, and politicized in Afghanistan and set loose in the land of Arabs and Islam, spreading fear and profanity."

Al-Ansari then looks at what he calls the Israel file, the objective of which, he believes, was to strike the PLO. He asserts: "Nothing was more effective in striking patriotism and national identity than religion." He continues: "Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] was allowed to be set up and many practices were waived, because the point was that oneupmanship could attract the people, making the PLO lose its credibility and its supportive masses." He says: "The Hamas lesson goes back to its early stages; the bullets are now directed at the chests of the instigators." Al-Ansari feels: "The issue here is simply that when things start with bad intentions, when they start by playing with fire, the players will get their fingers burned."

He claims: "The same law applies to the grand master, the United States" and elaborates: "There is a great difference between conditioning and taming beasts." He states: "We understand that the superpowers cannot be taken by surprise by one incident or another, when a regime is toppled or a coup takes place. We understand that they work on more than one course at the same time and in parallel with various forces in those countries in which they have an interest." Nevertheless, he maintains: "Pushing countries and regimes and putting great pressure on them, even when these regimes cooperate, has dangerous consequences, whether overt and direct, or covert and delayed."

Al-Ansari believes the United States "played this game" with the Soviet Union, and: "It humiliated and embarrassed its leaders, especially those that cooperated with it—Gorbachev, who fell, and Yeltsin, who is on his way out." And the writer applies this example to what he says the United States does with the developing countries: "It has encouraged many currents, granted leaders refuge, not only 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman and Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, but many others. In the name of democracy, freedom, and openness, the United States and France met, held contacts with, and encouraged these groups in their countries. Now it makes accusations and starts a campaign against Islam and the Muslims." He goes on: "The day the United States, through the IMF and the World Bank, pressured some countries and prescribed prescriptions not appropriate for the poor countries, the day it piled on the pressure to implement and apply difficult programs too heavy for the people to bear in too short a time, that day, contacts between the regimes and the people, between majority parties and the people, between the government and the people were lost."

He says: "We started to hear about silent coups without a shot, a tank, or masses." He reasons with a touch of irony: "Not heeding the voice of reason, moderation, experience, or those who have gone before, such as Egypt, seem to be the norm and law here." Al-Ansari asserts: "We face a dangerous state full of frustration, desperation, mind-searching, problems, and work—something that has affected everyone." He leaves the reader to consider: "The fire has struck every house, American and English, Egyptian, Algerian, Gulf, and Russian. The list goes on and no one is excluded."

'Decisive' Action Against Terrorists Promised

NC1103211393 Cairo Channel 1 Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Interior Minister Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa met with officers in various training courses at the Police Academy's Commanders Institute and Officer Training Institute. He spoke to them about the current security situation. He said the practices of the terrorist groups and their continuing attempts to shake society's security and stability will only be met with firm and decisive action from the security forces so that the society will be safe from their evil. The security and stability of the society, he added, will not be left hostages in the hands of a tyrannical, rancorous, and misleading group.

The interior minister stressed the importance of cooperation and concerted efforts to find the dens to which members of these groups flee. The meeting was attended by first assistants and assistants of the interior minister; Major General Fakhr-al-Din Khalid, assistance to the minister; and the president of the Police Academy.

'Safety' Promised for Surrendering Terrorists

NC1203072393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2235 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 11 Mar (MENA)—Interior Minister 'Abd-al-Halim Musa has clarified that there is no option: We must firmly confront terrorism and its elements irrespective of the burdens and sacrifices, especially after terrorist activities exceeded the limits to now threaten the safety of innocent citizens.

The recent attacks also confirmed that they persist in depriving hardworking citizens of their livelihood and a decent life.

In a statement to the newspaper AL-AHRAM to be published tomorrow, Friday, the interior minister guaranteed the safety of terrorists who discard their weapons and turn themselves over to the security authorities and said they can rest assured that they will be given a fair trial on all the charges against them.

'Abd-al-Halim Musa concluded his statement by warning that if some terrorist elements insist on carrying weapons and implementing terrorist plans, anything that happens to them will be their own responsibility.

Policeman Killed, 150 Fundamentalists Arrested

NC1103142993 Paris AFP in English 1400 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, March 11 (AFP)—Muslim extremists shot dead a policeman and wounded another in southern Egypt on Thursday [11 March], as security forces rounded up 150 fundamentalist suspects around the country, police said.

The attack followed police raids on fundamentalist strongholds in Cairo and a mosque in the southern town of Aswan during which 22 people died in gunbattles, including five officers.

Abu-al-Fadl 'Isa, a traffic policeman, was killed in Suhaj province, around 450 kilometres (280 miles) south of the capital, police said. His assistant, Haris Sa'ud, was wounded, and the assailants escaped.

Security forces detained around 50 people for questioning, while 100 fundamentalists were rounded up in other parts of Egypt.

Fifty al-Jihad Members Arrested 10-11 Mar

NC1203115993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1031 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 12 Mar (MENA)—Citing a security source, the newspaper AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I reports today that 50 members of the al-Jihad Organization have been arrested in the past 48 hours following their return to the country through the al-Sallum border point [on the Libyan-Egyptian border]. It says the group members are being interrogated, and that they are the third group to return from Afghanistan.

The newspaper adds that following the interrogation of 140 members of the second group, it was learned that they have adopted a new ideology calling for launching guerrilla warfare against police forces. These members visited neighboring countries with false travel documents, formed assassination squads, monitored senior government and press officials, received instructions from al-Jihad Organization leader 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, and received funds from abroad through middlemen.

In the past hours the security forces have launched a series of attacks on terrorist hideouts in Rawd al-Faraj, Bulaq, and Imbabah [in Cairo] and have arrested 150 people suspected of belonging to the al-Jihad Organization.

Weapons Seized in Mosque After Clash

NC1003184493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1422 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Text] Aswan, 10 Mar (MENA)—Public Attorney Counselor Sa'id Hilmi has said that a 7.62-mm machine gun was seized in the al-Rahman mosque, which was the scene of a confrontation between the police and the extremists. Twenty bullets were found in the possession of 'Ali Ahmad Taha, and police also seized four revolvers, three locally-made explosive devices, five Molotov cocktails, four plastic cans containing explosives, a gasoline container, four daggers, and two motorcycles without license plates. Some iron bars were also found on the mosque's roof.

The public attorney said the third of the seven people killed in the clash has been identified as 28-year old Kamal Bastawi. The identities of the remaining four are still unknown.

He said interrogations of the suspects by security men began today, and a coroner was assigned to determine whether or not the deaths and injuries were caused by police fire.

Nine public prosecution chiefs and agents are participating in these interrogations under the supervision of the public attorney.

Islamic Group Plan To Bomb Tourist Cafe Uncovered

NC1203121993 Paris AFP in English 1128 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, March 12 (AFP)—Muslim extremists have threatened to blow up a cafe here when it was full of holidaymakers, police said Friday [12 March].

The underground al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah group [Islamic Group] said in a letter to the police it would blow up the Najib Mahfuz coffee shop in Cairo's Khan al-Khalili souk when it was "packed with tourists."

Police dispatched reinforcements to the area and searched the coffee shop, named after the Egyptian author who won the 1988 Nobel Prize for literature.

Three people, including two tourists, were killed last month and 20 others injured when another popular Cairo coffee shop was bombed by Muslim extremists, police said. There has been no claim for the attack.

The al-Jama'ah are determined to set up a hardline Muslim state in Egypt, where fundamentalist violence has left around 100 people dead, including more than 20 in clashes this week.

They have aimed their attacks against police and tourists, a vital source of income.

'Extremists' Arrested, Links to al-Jihad Cited

NC1003170893 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 8 Mar 93 p 1

[Report by Najwa 'Abd-al-'Aziz]

[Excerpts] The Higher State Security Prosecution began an intense investigation into a clandestine organization attempting to overthrow the regime yesterday.

Security agencies arrested 20 extremists in Hulwan last Thursday [4 March]. The state security detectives found leaflets calling for attacks on tourism, firearms, and sharp-edged weapons in their possesion. Investigations revealed that the suspects belong to various organizations stemming from the al-Jihad Organization. [passage omitted]

Strict orders have been issued to all officers and police commanders not to drive police cars in Imbabah and al-Haram areas of al-Jizah.

Libya

Al-Bishari Interviewed on Lockerbie

PM1103152993 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 8-14 Mar 93 pp 40-42

[Interview with Ibrahim al-Bishari, Libyan representative at the Arab League, by Ashraf al-Faqiyy in Cairo; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Faqiyy] Is Libya still determined not hand over the two suspects in the case of the 1988 Pan Am airliner's explosion over Lockerbie in Scotland in implementation of Security Council Resolution 731?

[Al-Bishari] UN Security Council Resolution 731 does not stipulate that suspects should be handed over. It calls on Libya to cooperate judicially with the Western states, that is the United States, France, and Britain. We have implemented the resolution and complied with all its provisions, and we are completely willing to cooperate judicially. We have also renounced and rejected all kinds and forms of terrorism and provided what we could in implementation of the resolution. However, the Western states' insistance on escalating the crisis was due to the conflict between Libya's political stances and the administration of former U.S. President George Bush. [passage omitted]

We are a small country with a population not exceeding 4 million. We do not seek a confrontation with the United States, France, and Britain. If we hand over the suspects—which is an unfair request—we would create a new dangerous phenomenon in the Third World that would lead to the collapse of the principle of sovereignty. [passage omitted]

[Al-Faqiyy] Do you believe that, with President Clinton's administration in power, the atmosphere is now right for ending Libya's dispute with the West?

[Al-Bishari] Let me emphasize that we cannot and do not have the capabilities to defeat the West. We are a small state. The United States is the top world state. What we want is to preserve our dignity and our rights. The Clinton administration's assumption of power creates a different political atmosphere which might lead to a solution, particularly as the new administration does not know us and we do not know its members, and there are no old enmities between us. We invite the U.S. Administration to hold a direct dialogue and negotiations and to come to some understanding with a view to finding a way out for us and for them. In the same vein, we will continue to knock hard on the American door until it opens. We are not thieves, and we want to enter through the door to reach a compromise solution following their rejection of all the proposals we made for the trial of the suspects in Libya, Malta, or an Arab League member state.

[Al-Faqiyy] That means that you are willing to hand the suspects over to a third state for trial. Does that not run contrary to Libyan sovereignty, international law, and your own confirmed opposition to their extradition?

[Al-Bishari] Our agreement to hand the suspects over to a third state is a voluntary gesture. In that, the decision is ours and the aim is to find a solution to the Libyan crisis. It is an internal decision reflecting a voluntary concession. We reject any foreign dictate to hand over the suspects. If the suspects are found guilty and if they were unable to pay the necessary financial compensations in connection with the crisis, then the Libyan people would pay the compensations. We had previously explained that to the United Nations. It is in Libya's interest that a trial takes place. The current disagreement is over the venue.

[Al-Faqiyy] Do you want the Arab states not to implement Security Council Resolution 748 imposing an air ban on Libya and to reject the UN resolutions which are in conflict wth Arab interests?

[Al-Bishari] It is in the interest of the Arab states to comply with Arab legitimacy and to put aside everything that runs agains Arab interests. We are living in a world of blocs. [passage omitted]

We ask the Arab states not to comply with Security Council Resolution 748 because it is in conflict with their own interests. Some 1.5 million Egyptians are suffering as a result of the blockade against Libya. That is in addition to half a million Sudanese and others from Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and other neighbors, not to mention the effect the air ban has had on Arab airlines. Why should they comply with the sanctions and with the Security Council resolution against Libya, which we are convinced is an unjust and unfair resolution? Other resolutions, such as Resolution 799, are not being implemented. The United Nations and the Security Council clearly have double standards. We urge the Arab states to lift their ban on the Jamahiriyah and we also understand that every state has its own circumstances. [passage omitted]

[Al-Faqiyy] It has been claimed that, because of Libya's tribal structure, there are differences within the foreign ministry leadership regarding the question of extradition of the Libyan suspects, and that your appointment as Libyan representative at the Arab League was made to give Ibrahim al-Bishari Arab protection in case demands are made for him to be handed over because he was in charge of the foreign security organ (intelligence) when the Lockerbie incident occurred. What do you think of that?

[Al-Bishari] In Libya there is a revolution with one line. It is led by Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and we all work under his leadership. There are no divisions or differences. The differences of opinion which occur are in the interest of the Jamahiriyah. The poeple wield power through the people's bureaus. As regards the appointment of 'Umar al-Muntasir as secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison (foreign minister), that does not mean a change in Libya's foreign policy. We both toe the same line. If al-Muntasir is an extremist then so am I and if he is a rightist then so am I. Change is possible and legitimate in the Jamahiriyah. My appointment to the Arab League and my leaving the post of foreign minister do not at all mean that this is a personal matter. Legitimacy is derived from the Libyan leadership and the Libyan people. My performance in all the positions I held has been commended by all. I also wish to emphasize that my name is not on the list of suspects in connection with the Lockerbie case. I visited the United States and Britain after the crisis and I have diverse links with various officials at various levels. Had I been wanted I would have been arrested at one of the airports of the countries I visited. [passage omitted]

[Al-Faqiyy] It has been reported that the British have more persistent questions on your links wih the Irish [Republican] Army [IRA] and that your answers helped but were insufficient. How do you view the British-Libyan dialogue?

[Al-Bishari] Three British-Libyan meetings were held. During these meetings we received some questions and we answered them. I believe that in British-Libyan relations, the file on the IRA has now been fully closed. We wish the British would reciprocate our goodwill and we wish that the dialogue on security matters would develop into a political dialogue. Restoration of British-Libyan ties would serve British interests. [passage omitted]

[Al-Faqiyy] A number of terrorist training camps in Libya have been closed. There are suspicions that Libya is manufacturing chemical weapons in al-Rabitah plant and other areas in Libya. Was that [the closure of camps] in implementation of Security Council Resolution 731?

[Al-Bishari] There are no terrorist camps in Libya. Foreign Minister 'Umar al-Muntasir has sent an urgent message to the Security Council calling on UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali to form an international commission to verify that there are no terrorist training camps in the Jamahiriyah. As regards al-Rabitah plant, it is a medicine plant open to everyone especially those wishing to invest. It has nothing to do with chemical materials. We support clearing the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction without discrimination in favor of any state in the region to ensure stability. There are other motives behind the charge that Libya produces chemical weapons. We would welcome any international commission to ascertain that there are no chemical plants in the Jamahiriyah.

[Al-Faqiyy] Is Libya trying to break its isolation by flirting with American oil companies, with Clinton in power and considering his economic policies?

[Al-Bishari] The American oil companies are our partners in billions of dollars. They left Libya in 1981. We want them to come back and get their money undiminished. We also want them to develop the oil industry in Libya. We could have confiscated the funds of these companies but we are honest people and we do not confiscate the assets of others. We seek mutual benefits.

[Al-Faqiyy] The sanctions committee will meet on 15 April. Do you think that the sanctions could reach the point of an embargo on Libyan oil.

[Al-Bishari] I think it is unlikely that the sanctions committee will impose an embargo on Libyan oil. The U.S. Administration has other interests. Furthermore, the refineries of several European states depend on cheap Libyan light oil. [passage omitted]

Officials Discuss Blockade With Iraqi Minister

JN1103105993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2140 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Text] Tripoli, 10 Mar (INA)—Trade Minister Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih last night met with Dr. Muhammad Bayt al-Mal, secretary of the Libyan General People's Committee for Planning, Trade and Finance. They discussed means of promoting bilateral relations and prospects for economic and trade cooperation between the two fraternal countries.

The two ministers reviewed the effects of the unjust economic blockade imposed on Iraq, and its negative repercussions on the lives of thousands of citizens—children, women, and old people. They also reviewed the effects of the air embargo imposed on Libya under the cover of international legitimacy and within the framework of the policy of double standards.

Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih arrived in Tripoli the day before yesterday on an official visit to Libya. He met with Jum'ah al-Fazzani, secretary of the General People's Committee for Unity, and discussed with him ways to confront the blockade imposed on the two fraternal countries.

Al-Qadhdhafi Discusses Water Shortage

LD1003200693 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 9 Mar 93

["Third part" of meeting between Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and unidentified oil and economic experts, on 9 March, place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Al-Qadhdhafi] Water is divided into two kinds: surface and underground water. Can you tell us the estimate of underground water? Can we know the quantity of water in store, how long will it last, and how much are we using from it now?

[Expert] In reality, estimates of underground water are not given in terms of stored water but of renewable water [words indistinct] before quantity. For instance: if we take a basin such as the Murzuq basin and make an estimate of the water stored in it we would see that this would be in terms of billions, thousands of billions [of cubic meters], huge figures. But in reality the renewable quantity is small, and perhaps it is not being renewed at all [with rainfall]. So long as these quantities, no matter how huge they may be, are not renewed, any withdrawal of water from them will be in fact depletion, slow or rapid according to the quantities of water decided to be withdrawn from the storage basin.[passage omitted].

If we take into consideration the need for immediate supplies and the secure quantities of water, without withdrawal from the unrenewable reserves, the quantities available are in fact no more than 500 million cubic meters a year. These are quantities of usable water that are in the Jufara plain where some rain feeds underground water. They are also to be found in al-Jabal al-Akhdar and some other areas: Suf al-Jil, al-Hamadah and the [word indistinct]. This water is renewed every year, and it is possible to get this figure [500 million] from the coastal strip. [passage omitted].

[Al-Qadhdhafi] How much are we now pumping out?

[Expert] We are currently pumping out about 4.7 billion [cubic meters]. As I have mentioned earlier, some of this, for instance, which amounts to 1.3 billion, is from the Jufara plain only. In fact, the Jufara plain, for instance, does not, according to current studies in our possession, tolerate more than 0.2 billion from which we pump out 1.3. in the other parts of the Jamahiriyah, the quantities are distributed according to the basins.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] In other words, the Jufara plain does not tolerate pumping out more than 200 million cubic meters a year, and we have so far pumped out 1 billion.

[Expert] This picture, that is, this is what could be pumped out, and this is what is actually being pumped out. Therefore, the difference, which is in the region of 1,100 millions, is a deficit. This deficit is shown by the shapes we have seen, i.e. the continuous decline, the merger of sea water, over the limit salinity, and desertification.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] What will happen if we continue like this, that we pump out 1.3 billion cubic meters from the Jufara plain?

[Expert] What could happen has actually started to happen. Water has become very salty, because in the coastal areas the wells may not dry up. The wells remain but with salty water, because the pumped out quantity is replaced. As for the areas which are remote from the sealine, they dry up, and in fact many wells have dried up.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Despite the rainfall!

[Expert] Despite the rainfall.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Because we pump out more than the rainfall.

[Expert] It is similar to someone who puts a quantity of money in a bank and then withdraws more than he deposits monthly, the deficit happens, i.e. the crisis, in fact an environmental crisis, takes place. A few days ago we carried out a study on the drinking water in the municipality of Tripoli, or within the borders of the plan for the municipality of Tripoli, to look into the extent of the correspondence of the drinking water that citizens drink to the international standards in force. We found out that the average salinity in some residential areas in Tripoli exceeds ten times what is allowed by the international health organizations. [passage omitted]

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Tell us what happens if we continue [pumping out unrenewable water reserves]?

[Expert] If we continue, then all the expanse of water will be depleted, all the underground expanses of water in the north, and there will be no more drinkable waters.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Judging by the wells you have sunk, after how many years will a disaster happen?

[Expert] In fact it has already happened in some wells and in some regions, but in other areas it will happen soon because there is a disorganized, very rapid increase in consumption, together with the increase in population, farming activity, the number of wells sunk, the pumping, pumping motors, etc. We see that this difficult point has already been reached in some areas, and it could happen in other areas in the next 5 to 10 years at most. It will be a disaster. [passage omitted]

[Al-Qadhdhafi] What happens if we use the great man-made river for drinking water only?

[Expert] When all its stages are finished, the great man-made river will yield about 2.2 billion cubic meters a year, which will be enough to supply drinking water to about 22 or 25 million people.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] This will happen if we use the water of the river only for drinking, it would be enough for 22 million people?

[Expert] The population of the Jamahiriyah will not attain this number before the year 2030 or 2040. [passage omitted]

[Al-Qadhdhafi] But the lifespan of the man-made river is limited; it will last for 50 years, perhaps. So, even if we use the waters of the great man-made river for drinking only, in 50 years time the 22 million people will be without water at all. [passage omitted]

We have said that rainfall waters that renew the underground waters in the north, that is, 0.5 billion cubic meters a year, are enough for 5 million people as drinking water. But in the north we don't just drink the water; we plant, we manufacture, we wash. How much is needed then to meet all these purposes? Because there must be no misunderstanding, with somebody saying: That is it, we are 5 million people and we have enough water. We said that the rainfall water will be enough for 5 million people as drinking water only. [passage omitted]

Thus, the waters in the north are enough for 0.5 million people only, for all purposes.

[Expert] That is true. [passage omitted]

Not all the rainfall waters feed underground basins, or can be harnessed. As Dr. 'Abd al-Hafidh said, in al-Jabal al-Akhdar, if you calculate the quantity of rainfall there you find that they are considerable, but if you calculate the quantity that can be harnessed behind dams or in cisterns, in an economical and possible way, you find in reality very modest figures that might not reach even 80 million cubic metres a year generally, and what can be harnessed from it might not exceed this figure, that is, 40 or 50 million only. Dams have, in fact, indeed been built in all the main priority regions where dams can be built, for instance in the Jabal al-Gharbi or Jabal al-Akhdar regions. What remains is quite marginal. If you go to the big dams built in Jinayn, Hani, Udari, Gattara, Zaza, and Bir Uad, all of these dams have in general harnessed 50-60 million cubic meters. This is a maximum figure as we do not reach it every year.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] [passage omitted] What will the situation be in 20-30 years' time when the population attains... [incomplete sentence as heard]

[Expert] In 20 years there might not even be any more arable land at all. Currently, if we look at the agricultural figures available, we see that the area of arable land per head of population is shrinking every year. This is a general feature in the Arab countries, not just in Libya. If the concentration of the population continues in this narrow [northern] strip even life itself will become almost impossible in terms of production. You will not find farming areas there at all, in addition to the fact that the water supply situation will make it necessary for people to leave this region. They will not be able to bear the situation any more. [passage omitted]

Many people have already found that their wells have dried up or become salty, and the inhabitants of the big cities are suffering. These are the problems that accompany...

[Al-Qadhdhafi interrupts] You said that 6 percent of the Libyan land is arable.

[Expert] No, I said that 6 percent is situated under a rainfall line of 100 mm and above. [passage omitted] And this is not all of the arable lands. As Dr. Tahar said yesterday, only 0.5 percent of Libyan territory is arable, just 0.5 not even 1 percent. A great deal of the 6 percent is grazing land.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] The prosperous region where rain falls covers two areas: From Misrata to Sidrata and the al-Jabal al-Akhdar.

[Expert] And the central area as well: the Lubyan region and some other areas.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] From Misrata to Sidrata, a farming region, has, thanks be to God, become an area of buildings, establishments, shops, and depots.

[Expert] We also have other problems, which are the environmental pollution problems, and water pollution also as a result of...

[Al-Qadhdhafi interrupting] The expansion of the sea and its encroachment on the [drinking] water.

[Expert] Of course, this is considered the worst kind of pollution and it is increasing at an alarming rate. The annual infiltration of sea water into the land is very great. [passage omitted on Al-Qadhdhafi reminding his audience that he warned in previous speeches of these dangers; a water expert saying that their job is to keep a constant eye on the conditions of the reservoirs and noting that people in the southern oases have started digging wells to a depth of 100-200 meters in the search for water to irrigate their palm trees; another expert saying that the current agricultural policy encourages production of more vegetables than the requirements of the local market]

[Expert] All the water resources of the Jamahiriyah are enough to meet the needs of about three million people.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] This means that all the water of the Jamahiriyah is enough for 3 million, the waters in the north, the south, in the big [underground] basins, are enough for all purposes for three million people.

[Expert] Continuous use, that is.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] On the condition that the Libyan population does not exceed three millions, and that there will not be a problem in a situation like this. [passage omitted] But this is impossible: we are five million people now and every year we increase by one million. Therefore, there is bound to be a disaster in 20, 30, or 50 years or even in 100 years. Certainly there will then be no possibility for life in this region, in north Africa in general, unless a miracle happens, the one we spoke about such as the exploitation of new energy like the sun, etc, the desalination of sea water to make it suitable for agriculture, or a meteorological change. [passage omitted]

We should not just feed the nation, give it drinking water, chocolate, dollars, canned water and forget that in 50 years it will die. We would then become a laughing stock in history.

Unbelievable things are happening in Saudi Arabia. They have gasoline but they import water from abroad. Some day the gasoline will dry up and all the Saudis will become unemployed. What would you do with Riyadh? The oasis will all dry up. [passage omitted]

[Expert] After the last meeting, which took place on 9 September 1992, when we talked about the means and common factors that would enable us to determine the Jamahiriyah's oil resources and to try to develop and exploit these resources to resolve other problems we may be facing, we prepared a lengthy report on long-term oil investments abroad and what could these offer in this context. I will try to summarize the report now very briefly.

We started off from the Jamahiriyah's shores looking toward the market, the natural market for Libyan oil since the early years. We wanted to be present in many regions—Italy, Germany, and the other countries which used to receive large quantities of Libyan oil. The first presence of the Oil Investment Company was through Tamoil in Italy, specifically in northern Italy. That was the first year during which we started work in that field. After that year ...

[Al-Qadhdhafi interrupting] What did you do?

[Expert continues] The first company we took over, Tamoil, was concerned with marketing oil in the north of Italy. The first year was in Italy.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] That was to compete with important companies which have pumping stations, such as Shell and Esso, and Libyan companies were going to operate these stations in Europe.

[Expert] This is what we tried to do; instead of just being concerned with oil exploration, prospecting, and oil industry generally, we believed that we should be present in the market too. In the final analysis the oil produced in Libyan territories enters the market and is sold to the consumer in these markets. Our role in the Jamahiriyah used to end at the Libyan port. Our relations with the Libyan oil used to end at the port of export. We believed that we should follow the Libyan crude oil—whether in terms of transportation, we tried to have that done in Libyan tankers; or processing, we tried to have that done in refineries owned by the Jamahiriyah; or distribution to the end consumer, we tried to have that done through pumping stations owned by Libyan companies.

This was our first experience. The first company we possessed in Italy used to own a refinery which needed a lot of development to reach the capacity of 80,000 barrels a day, and about 740 distribution stations. This was the starting point. I do not want to talk extensively about our investments until 1992...

[Al-Qadhdhafi interrupting] How many distribution stations do you have?

[Expert] Right now?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] In Italy.

[Expert] If you mean right now [hesitates] The idea is shortly coming. We have now in Italy about 2,200 distribution stations. We started with 774.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Who would believe that Libya has 2,000 distribution stations!

[Expert] Whoever does not believe it...

[Al-Qadhdhafi interrupting] More than 2,000 stations! This is only in Italy!

[Expert] No, this is not in Italy only. The question concerning Italy, we now have 2,293 stations there. [sentence as heard] I am talking about the situation up to 1992, because over the past two months we have taken over 300 stations in Italy. Therefore, the development of the number of stations is in Italy and Germany. Of course, after Italy, we entered Germany and bought an oil refinery and an integrated [mutakamilah] company in Switzerland which also owns a refinery and distribution stations. And we set up other stations in what is called the east European states where the number of stations owned by us reached 2,400 by 1992, and the refining capacity in the refineries which are completely owned by us has increased. In the press and all the mass media...

[Al-Qadhdhafi interrupting] They talk about imperialism!

[Expert] They say that Libya, through its leadership, is attempting to invade new stations and buy new stations everyday.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] The Italian newspapers have said that.

[Expert] And the German newspapers, too. We say that this is the only way by which we can coexist, that this raw material is ours, and this market is yours. So long as you are investing in our country, we must invest in your country in order to quash completely the problems which could appear in the future as a result of the pricing method of this commodity, that is, I sell it to you—in as much as you have taken it from me—and in return you invest in my country and I invest in yours.

The development in our refineries which has taken place, as I heard from members of the oil group here yesterday and the day before yesterday who are trying to arrive at a reduction of the production of heavy oils, in 1975-76 we had 40 percent heavy oil. In fact, as a result of the simple development in some of our refineries, we have now arrived at the ratio of 20 or 26 percent only [words indistinct]. This has, of course, helped to improve the revenues from these refineries. [words indistinct] because the refineries are small. We were able to borrow from international banks and managed to carry out this job, and we still have an opportunity in the forthcoming five-year plan to get rid of the largest part of this figure, because the problem of marketing heavy oils abroad, in the world now, has become very difficult, as the oil group people have said, as a result of the present alternative methods, be it from gas, nuclear energy, coal, etc. [passage omitted]

These are the sums which have been invested so far, that is, the invested sums are considered very very modest in comparison with the achieved results. The total of what has been invested until now in all this work is $702 million distributed among the main companies to which we contribute. Of course, of this figure 450 million is the company's capital.

In order to do this, these were the quantities transported from the Jamahiriyah to refineries in Italy, Germany, Switzerland, France, and some other refineries. In the first year, in 1986, we began taking 40,000 barrels a day, and in 1992 we arrived at 213,000 barrels a day, that is, with a average of 173 during all these years. We note the rise in quantity as a result of the increasing number of refineries and stations. This represents about 25 percent of the marketed Libyan crude oil.

With a view improving the products of refineries, we are buying some other crude oils from other countries. This is the quantity bought in the years up to 1992: about 40.9 [units not specified], that is, one million barrels a year. [sentence as heard] We have to buy quantities of other oils for mixing because Libyan crude oil is considered to be very expensive and it can be mixed with other crude oils, preserving the same quality. The needs of the distribution network, not the refineries, are met from our own refineries, and also from some imports of Libyan oil production from Libyan refineries abroad. A quantity of 1,000 tons was bought from 1986 to 1992. We note that there were almost no figures for 1992, except very very small ones, because as far as oil is concerned 1992 was a very bad year, and it was not possible to buy quantities of Libyan oil products from Libyan refineries abroad.

On the the hand, during the past period, the oil corporation exploited Libyan tankers which before could not always work. This is the transportation activity from Libyan ports: in 1992 we carried 130 cargoes, including 108 crude oil cargoes because the Libyan tankers are all for crude oil. Of the 108 cargoes, 62 were carried by Libyan tankers. We are now urging the maritime transportation companies to develop their tankers which have become very old and cannot continue any longer. [passage omitted]

For example, we have within the Oil Investment Company a company that is specifically concerned with transportation. In fact, we bought our first tanker. The first tanker we bought was registered under another company. Every tanker we shall buy will be registered under another company's name.

Regarding our idea of what is to be done in the next five years—until 1997; we want to raise the volume of our sales to 450,000 tons of oil. Yes, 450,000 tons. That is right; 450,000 barrels a day. [sentence as heard]. At the moment it is 213,000. We want to reach 450,000, bearing in mind that we were not coordinating with the people in the corporation. [passage omitted]

[Another expert] This is the case in other fields, in new places and activities, according to the activity. What is meant by new places and (?activities) are those other than the ones we talked about, other than [words indistinct] such as some Arab and African states and the Jamahiriyah as well which needs $767 million in the next five years. [passage omitted]

If we invest these sums, the number of stations we have will increase, during the period 1992-97 to 4,099. We have, in fact, reached this figure in 1993 because we have been able to increase the number of stations in Italy to more than the figure we expected.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] How many stations will there be?

[Expert] There will be 4,099 stations by 1997.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Where?

[Expert] We will have 2,000 stations in Italy. However, now this figure has increased because, as I mentioned at the beginning, we had really a very good opportunity to buy stations and we have acquired some 300 stations which did not figure in our program. We have thus some 2,300 stations in Italy. We now have 255 stations in Switzerland at present and this figure will reach 340. Our program provides for up to 1,000 stations in France. We have started now building stations in Spain, because things are different there and only the possibility of building stations exists and one cannot buy existing ones, some [word indistinct] stations. We had 140 in Germany and we now have more than 190 stations and it is expected that we reach the figure of 330. This figure can even be exceeded following the latest developments. We also started to build stations in Hungary and we will reach the figure of 100 there. As Czechoslovakia is now divided into two states, we have stations in both states and we will reach the figure of 117. The total will be 4,099. [passage omitted]

This will take us to the highest volume of investments which we have shared out between the three (?sectors), in addition to the currency reserve estimated at about $3.469 billion distributed to the marketing and refining operations and the development of the oil industry in new areas, add to this the reserve of these investments. [sentence as heard].

Naturally, in the policy of oil investments we do not rely at all on the capital in our investments because we believe, as an investment company, that investments need to be a mixture of real capital and borrowed money.

If we can do this quickly, this will be the shape of our budget for the next few years, namely that the overall assets of the company will be about $6.568 billion. These will include fixed assets worth $3.726 billion and other assets of 112 million. The other aspect is the liabilities which include the rights of the partners...[speaker corrects himself] Sorry, the rights of the shareholders. These liabilities are estimated at $3,014 billion. [passage omitted]

Despite all of this, we expect to make profits of about (?$193) million in 1997. This result represents an increase on the returns of the value of the dollar for every barrel of processed oil. This improvement is expected to increase steadily in the next few years as a result of maintaining the levels of consumption. At the end of this plan, the overall net value is expected to be about $3 billion, that is, six times the annual flow of money.

We see that after seven years...[speaker corrects himself] I mean after five years, the value of the current assets will be $2.694 billion...[pauses] After deducting costs and so on from the current assets of $2.191 billion the net current assets will be $503 million. The long-term debts are $1.363 billion which we borrowed to make up all the assets. The overall debts are $860 million. At the end of this period, the fixed assets will be $3.875 billion and when we take out $860 million we will be left with

$3.015 billion, and then when we add the consumption levels which we deducted from 1992 to 1997, namely about $1.333 billion, we are left with a net real value of $4.348 billion.

After deducting the money invested until 1996, that is, $666 million, and the money used to finance the operation, which amounts to $1.937 billion, we reach a total of $2.603 billion and if we do not take into account inflation and the increase in real value we still have a real money surplus of $1.745 billion in addition to the money we would have invested until 1997. [passage omitted]

As a result of the additional investments, we will have cash liquidity, that is, any sum invested will provide you with cash liquidity. There could be a profit or there could be a loss. However, the income will increase. The yellow color on the chart indicates cash liquidity. As a result of the investments we have made, our income has increased. When we subtract the additional income from the sum invested we get the green color on the chart which represents the net return at the monetary level. [passage omitted]

If we want to prolong the benefits from oil, one of the ways would be to double or increase the investment in oil abroad. Now is the right time for this operation in terms of climate and it is the right time for us historically. [passage omitted].

[Al-Qadhdhafi] But there are negative possibilities.

[Expert] In investments abroad? Yes, there are negative possibilities but we always look for investments which on the whole outweigh their shortcomings. An investment is a mixture of negative and positive elements which we call venture elements. All our investments so far have been in markets regarded as normal for Libyan crude oil. Normal, that is to say that experience has proven that they cannot dispense with it—whether in terms of quality or proximity of distance. [passage omitted on need for producers and consumers to work together; another speaker saying that it may too late to enter European refinery market and may entail higher production and marketing costs; previous speaker's response]

[Another expert] In fact, I am not criticizing Mr. al-Hadi but he says that we are still at the beginning of the road as regards investments abroad. I would like to point out that investments abroad are not like investments at home. Investments abroad are commercial investments. [passage omitted]

[Another expert] We must bear something in mind, and this must be clear, namely competing for markets. Libyan oil must have markets and the markets we have at the moment are the Italian market, the German market, and some other European markets. In order to keep all these markets we must make investments for direct distribution and refineries. [passage omitted]

[Another expert] As a completion to what has been said with regard to oil investments, naturally there were other sectors where we made some investments. These were distributed in about 50 countries in some 88 participations in a number of companies. One should note that we have six companies for maritime transportation distributed in a number of states, about 12 industrial companies, about nine tourism companies, some six mining companies, 14 agricultural companies, three sea-fishing companies and about eight commercial companies. Naturally, they are distributed in geographic areas in the Arab homeland which has a large share with about 32 participations. We have about 18 in Europe, 18 in Africa, four in Asia, 14 in Malta, and two in Latin America. [passage omitted].

We have not always relied on the capital only because the capital we are talking about amounts to approximately 200 million dinars and has been returned completely through the profits which have been made and the remaining amount still being invested is considered profit or returns of the capital. [passage omitted]

All that has been said has negative points and we must restructure ourselves in the forthcoming period, considering for example that there are changes to (?laws). The IMF and the World Bank have started, particularly in many states, hampering the activity of this Libyan presence and thus we have changed the method of investments so that it will adapt to the new changes in the world. [passage omitted].

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Good, well, see you tomorrow, God willing.

Morocco

Filali on Sahara, Mideast Peace Process

PM1103145293 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 8-14 Mar 93 pp 24-28

[Interview with Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdellatif Filali by 'Afaf Zayn in Rabat; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Zayn] During Algerian Foreign Minister Redha Malek's visit to Rabat last month, did you reach an understanding on the normalization of relations between Morocco and Algeria so as to serve common issues, most notably the Western Sahara issue?

[Filali] The Moroccan-Algerian dispute is an artificial issue. The joint history of the two countries proves this. This is why we say that the dispute is an abnormal matter and we should not exaggerate the present dispute between Morocco and Algeria. We lent our Algerian brothers a great deal during their national struggle. We banked on that matter, which we believe is part of our pan-Arab duties, to establish strong relations between our two countries after the completion of Algeria's independence. And when the Western Sahara problem began and was espoused by Algeria, we considered the matter a strange thing, outside the natural and inevitable context of how the relationship should be between our two countries. And when Algeria reexamined its position on the question concerning the dispute in the Western Sahara and moved its position from that of a party concerned about the Western Sahara dispute to that of an interested country, the Saudi mediation succeeded and the process of normalizing relations began through the endeavors of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz. A tripartite summit was held in May 1987. It included His Majesty King Hassan II and President Chadli Bendjedid and was attended by King Fahd. Then Moroccan-Algerian relations began to recover gradually. Algeria's commitment to the position of a country interested in the dispute in the Western Sahara provides a wide margin for moving the relationship between Rabat and Algiers toward new horizons of cooperation.

[Zayn] What draws the attention in this context is the open statements made recently by Algerian Prime Minister Belaid Abdessalam, in which he said that Algeria does not accept that the referendum in the Western Sahara should be conducted other than on the basis of the Spanish 1974 census—which represents the Polisario's position of refusing to expand the lists of the Spanish census espoused by the Security Council in its Resolution 725. Can Algeria's return to the position of a country concerned about the dispute in the Western Sahara develop the relationship between Morocco and Algeria and help to secure a final solution to the Sahara dispute?

[Filali] How to conduct the referendum in the Western Sahara and the conditions and criteria on the basis of which it should be conducted is the responsibility of the United Nations, in whose care the Western Sahara file has been since the parties concerned, including Algeria, accepted the UN plan. As for the Algerian prime minister's statements, they concern him personally. And I do not believe that the content of these statements is binding on the United Nations in any way. Nor do I believe that the Algerian prime minister's view expresses the position of all Algeria.

[Zayn] Do you believe that replacing one Algerian foreign minister by another is liable to bring about fundamental changes in the Algerian regime's position on several issues, most notably the Sahara dispute and the status of Moroccan-Algerian relations? And did you sense during your talks with your new Algerian opposite number Redha Malek recently certain facts which prompt you to believe that the Algerian Government's attitude will differ from its attitude during Foreign Minister Brahimi's era?

[Filali] I believe Algerian Prime Minister Belaid Abdessalam's statements express his own view.

[Zayn] Are we to understand from that that there are various positions in Algeria vis-a-vis the relationship with Morocco and the Sahara dispute?

[Filali] It is very useful for us to determine that. I have no ready answers to those questions, though they are smart and go to the very core. During my colleague Redha Malek's visit I sensed a sincere desire to restore relations between our two countries to their inevitable course: distinctive relations within the framework of respecting every country's privacy and not interfering in its internal affairs. [passage omitted]

[Zayn] Algerian officials have once again begun to use political terms which go back to the early days of the Sahara dispute in 1975 after the setback which Moroccan-Algerian relations suffered early in the year. This change in the Algerian position coincided with the Polisario's threat to return to the military option. If the referendum in the Western Sahara is not conducted in accordance with the 1974 census, does the international situation allow a security setback in the Arab Maghreb? And do the balances of power in this region allow a backward move? In your view, on whom is the Polisario banking when it threatens to return to the military option?

[Filali] I do not believe that the international situation can allow the opening of files for which there are no longer justifications at the Arab Maghreb level. The military option and the threat to return to it inspires ridicule. At the regional level, I do not imagine that the Maghreb countries are prepared to move backward by decades. Several of the factors which led to the eruption of the Sahara dispute have changed. Many things have changed. And if anyone wants to go back to the past, that is up to him. It is up to him to delude himself about the possibility of restoring matters to their status in 1975 and before. As for on whom the Polisario is banking today when it makes its threats, and on whom it banked in the past, I say there is no such thing as the Polisario without Algeria.

[Zayn] Polisario leaders who returned to Morocco recently said that Algerian Defense Minister Khaled Nezzar had advised them to reach an understanding with Morocco, and that Algeria no longer agrees to the idea of establishing a minor state in the Western Sahara. Whereas Algerian Prime Minister Abdessalam Belaid's statements indicate something different from the positions adopted by the defense minister and member of the Higher State Council. Does the contradiction in the positions in Algeria with regard to the Sahara dispute represent a cause for concern for Rabat?

[Filali] Not at all. What you refer to concerns Algeria. We do not interfere in our neighbors' affairs. The Western Sahara file is in the care of the United Nations. And the resolutions adopted by the Security Council on this dispute—namely Resolutions 658, 690, and 725—talk in detail about the solution's course and procedural mechanism. If Algeria wants to take a position different from the concepts of these UN resolutions, that is between it and the Security Council. [passage omitted]

[Zayn] President Clinton's administration dealt cautiously with the Franco-British draft resolutions concerning the Western Sahara and then agreed to it. Is the caution of the new Democratic administration in Washington based on geostrategic considerations, in the light of the Democrats' past dealing with the Western Sahara, Algeria, and the file on human rights in the region? And how do you visualize the shape of the relationship between the Clinton administration and Morocco? And does the file prepared by the U.S. State Department on human rights in Morocco for 1992—which was clearly critical—reflect a certain indication of how the relationship will be between Washington and Rabat?

[Filali] The file prepared by the U.S. State Department on human rights in Morocco for 1992 is inherited by the Clinton administration from the George Bush administration. What justifies this belief of ours is that the file required several months and detailed reports to prepare. In some of its aspects this file reflects the views of Congress, which has a Democrat majority. Nevertheless, the file dealt positively with the constitutional amendments which King Hassan II introduced to the Moroccan Constitution, which the Moroccans agreed unanimously in a people's referendum and which grant the prime minister in Morocco new powers to enable him to enrich democratic principles in the country. We look with optimism at the new administration in the White House. King Hassan II has tasked former Culture Minister Mohamed Ben Issa with continuing the good relations with the United States. And I will visit Washington soon.

[Zayn] Following the recent meetings of the Maghreb Union foreign ministers held in Tunis 11 and 12 February you asked your colleagues the foreign ministers of the Maghreb countries for "a period of time to assess what has been achieved and determine the reasons for the faltering of the work of the Maghreb Union," for which the Marrakech agreement was established on 17 February 1988. Is the most marked obstacle the Sahara dispute's continuing unresolved, as Moroccan officials said in the past? Or are there new obstacles obstructing the Maghreb Union's march?

[Filali] The Sahara dispute's remaining unresolved is not the main obstacle. It is a major obstacle to the normalization of Moroccan-Algerian relations. And the continuation of the tension in relations between Algeria and Morocco—and they are two major countries in the Maghreb bloc—destroys trust at the level of the Maghreb Union as a whole and confuses the other Maghreb states, which assume that [Morocco] and Algeria form the main two pillars of this union. This is because it is regrettable for the two major components of the Maghreb Union to have a confrontational and abnormal relationship, when the other Maghreb countries—Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania—are looking to them to help to solve some of the problems preoccupying them.

The most marked obstacle to the Maghreb Union's growth is the differing economic systems applied inside each of the union member states. As long as there is no unified economic system the Maghreb Union cannot conclude economic agreements with the united European bloc. And economic integration—if takes place—would later develop into political integration. I requested a period of time in order to encourage every Maghreb country to reexamine the economic methods applied in it and thus rectify the defect with a view to achieving harmony with the other countries in the Maghreb bloc. It took the European countries a long time. They began with the 1958 Treaty of Rome, before announcing their complete unity in 1993.

[Zayn] Is the tension in Libyan-Western relations, especially the relations between Libya and the EC capitals, one of the obstacles which emerged after the establishment of the Maghreb Union and obstructed its march?

[Filali] Of course, the Maghreb Union has been affected by the tense relations between Tripoli and the European states, especially the joint projects between the Maghreb Union and the European states situated on the Mediterranean: France, Italy, and Spain. And the bad relations between Tripoli and Washington have affected European relations with the Maghreb Union.

[Zayn] Do you believe that the new U.S. Administration is willing to end the Lockerbie crisis with Libya? And will you include this issue on the agenda of your talks with the new U.S. Administration during your visit to the United States, which is expected to take place soon?

[Filali] We hope that an understanding will be reached between Washington and Tripoli. And I cannot answer a delicate question like that just on the basis of my impressions. With regard to us in Morocco, the contacts we were making to resolve this problem have been suspended. [passage omitted]

[Zayn] Has Morocco a special idea to help implement Resolution 799 and surmount the problem concerning the controversy over its implementation? Do you have in your mind a certain formula to resolve the deportees issue?

[Filali] We support the PLO's position on the deportees issue.

[Zayn] Morocco is putting the ball back in the PLO's court to resolve the deportees issue and its complications at the peace process level, with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher reportedly having accused the PLO of being terrorist. Do you believe that the contradiction between the Arab and U.S. views of the PLO's role serves the peace process?

[Filali] The claim that the PLO has terrorist inclinations is not a new position by successive U.S. Administrations. This negative U.S. position toward the PLO did not prevent the Arab states from dealing with the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Then the Arabs' way of dealing with the PLO developed and it is now being dealt with as a representative of the Palestinian state. And Yasir 'Arafat is the president of this Palestinian state now. Describing liberation movements as terrorist is something which we personally experienced in Morocco when our enemies described us as terrorists. But later our enemies who described us as terrorists—France and Spain—changed their positions and were forced to negotiate with us. And the French negotiated with the Algerians, whom they had described as terrorists, and reached solutions with them.

We in Morocco believe that no solution can be achieved in the peace process in the Middle East without talking to the main quarter which represents the Palestinian people and expresses their aspirations.

[Zayn] Will you, during your visit to Washington, raise this issue with the new U.S. Administration to urge it to adopt a more rational position in dealing with the PLO? And do you believe that the new U.S. Administration will agree to resume the dialogue with the PLO?

[Filali] Contacts between the United States and the PLO continued until the second Gulf war, despite all that had been said about the suspension of the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue after the Achille Lauro incident. What is important at this level at the moment is to put an end to the present situation. There are contacts at present between the United States and the PLO. The Palestinian negotiating delegation headed by Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Sahfi now goes to Tunis to meet and consult with the PLO openly.

[Zayn] During U.S. Secretary of State Christopher's tour of the cordon states' capitals it was noted that these capitals had dropped the "all or nothing" policy, and it was reported that the U.S. Administration would reward the Arab parties for their realistic approach. What is your opinion?

[Filali] We believe that the position of the Arab cordon states' capitals is new and positive. And we support this position. As the U.S. Administration wishes to play the full role of a partner in the peace process in the Middle East, it should view equally the Arab positions and their legitimate demands on the one hand and Israel and its demands for secure and recognized borders on the other.

As to what form the U.S. reward should take, that is a matter for the Arabs to decide. They should agree among themselves on what they want from the Americans. I heard that there is a plan to hold a meeting in Damascus among the foreign ministers of the cordon states to discuss the files on the peace process, so that the Arabs can determine exactly what they want from the new U.S. Administration.

[Zayn] With his recent tour of the Middle East Warren Christopher prepared for the call for economic cooperation between the Arabs and Israel. Does Morocco believe it is correct to have regional economic cooperation with Israel before withdrawals from the occupied Arab territories are completed?

[Filali] It is not possible now to submit proposals on economic cooperation among the Middle East states, including Israel, without solving the main problems resulting from the occupation of Arab territories. Economic cooperation should fall within the framework of a plan for a comprehensive solution to all issues, not outside it. The main problems must be solved, namely the Palestinian problem and withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and the Golan. The Arab states cannot cooperate with Israel while it continues to occupy their territories. It does not stand to reason. [passage omitted]

[Zayn] I heard that a high-ranking Iraqi envoy will visit Rabat and that this visit will coincide with the Morocco's preparations for the Arab League session, which it will head. What is your opinion?

[Filali] We have learned that President Saddam Husayn's brother will come to visit us. We have not officially ascertained that. I cannot talk about the visit of Barzan al-Tikriti, brother of President Saddam Husayn and his adviser for political affairs, as long as it is still not confirmed. We do not know what issues will be discussed with us. Nor do we know whether Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz will come to Morocco instead of President Saddam's brother.

Sudan

Authorities Arrest 86 Students in University Protest

NC1103194893 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1935 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Khartoum, 11 Mar (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—The authorities of the Islamic Front's regime in Khartoum cruelly confronted Sudanese students at the Khartoum branch of Cairo University. The students were demonstrating in front of the university the day before yesterday to protest the seizure of the university. The students shouted slogans against the regime of al- Bashir, al-Turabi, and the June gang and declared their rejection of the Sudanese regime's provocations of Egypt. The Sudanese security authorities arrested 86 students who were taken in civilian cars to an unknown destination.

Student Union, TNA Official Support University Change

EA1103204093 Khartoum SUNA in English 1640 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Khartoum, 11 Mar (SUNA)—The chairman of the Students' Union of al-Nilayn University has described the decision on transformation of Cairo University, Khartoum to al-Nilayn University as a response to the students' will.

He told SUNA that they in the Students Union accepted the decision because it will fulfill the students aspirations, saying that the former regulations of the university deprived the students from being demonstrators or lecturers in the university and deprived them also from joining (?in) the post-graduate studies in the university.

He further said all students' societies had sent cables to the union in support of the decision.

[SUNA in French at 0935 GMT adds the following: "The president of the Cultural and Education Commission of the Transitional National Assembly [TNA], Professor Muhammad Musa Mahmud, has stated that rejoining the Cairo University, Khartoum to the Sudanese Ministry of Higher Education is a sovereign decision which comes within the context of the revolution in higher education, and which goes hand in hand with the direction and policies adopted by the state. 'This decision should have been taken a long time ago, because the students of this university are Sudanese and they should be looked after by the Ministry of Higher Education,' he concluded."]

Opposition Condemns Closure

NC1103183393 Cairo MENA in English 1707 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, March 11—(MENA)—The Sudanese Democratic Unionist Party today condemned the Sudanese Government's decision of closing the Cairo University branch of Khartoum.

A party statement said here today the decision of the Sudanese regime is irresponsible and would harm the interests of the Sudanese people.

The statement said the branch of Cairo University in Khartoum since its establishment in 1955, played an active and influential role in spreading education and culture in Sudan.

The Sudanese al-Ummah Party also condemned today the Sudanese Government's decision of closing the Cairo University branch of Khartoum.

A party statement issued here today that the decision showed the political, economic, and domestic crisis which the Sudanese regime is facing. The statement said the decision was illegal and did not express the viewpoint of the Sudanese people. The statement asserted the deep-rooted and lasting relations between the Egyptian and Sudanese peoples.

Minister on University Takeover

NC1103200693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1906 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Khartoum, 11 Mar (MENA)—Sudanese Foreign Minister Dr. Sulayman Abu-Salih said the decision to turn the Khartoum branch of Cairo University into al-Nilayn University has nothing to do with the Hala'ib issue, stressing that Sudan's foreign policy is not reactionary.

In a statement today, the Sudanese minister said that the decision falls within the framework of the "higher education revolution that aims to Sudanize all stages of education."

The decision has caused widespread reaction, especially among ordinary Sudanese. A state of shock and disbelief at the decision, which most Sudanese find unjustifiable, remained for a second day. Some called for rejection of the decision, which primarily harms the Sudanese people.

As to the students, the students of the College of Science still do not know their fate, particularly after sitting for the end of year examinations in some courses while the examinations for the other courses have been postponed. There are reports that the new university administration has received the students' papers from the Egyptian teachers to mark them.

Information Minister on Satellite Transmissions

EA0903205093 Khartoum SUNA in French 0930 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Khartoum, 9 Mar (SUNA)—The minister of culture and information, Brigadier Sulayman Muhammad Sulayman, has said the direct transmission of world televisions to Sudan has become an unavoidable reality which cannot be prevented since it is a violation of human rights.

Speaking during a meeting at the Transitional National Assembly on 8 March, Mr. Sulayman said that 200 direct transmission dishes had been approved for citizens in conformity with regulations which were set up by the Ministry of Culture and Information, and that citizens could receive the direct transmissions without interference from the government.

Moreover, the brigadier general pointed out that the Sudanese people should take the responsibility upon themselves to confront these direct transmissions. He said the direct transmissions could only be confronted by improving television programs through attracting investors, encouraging television production, besides activating objective programming, and exchanges with sister countries, which had already started with Syria, Jordan, and Iraq.

He added that the Ministry of Culture and Information would put into service four television channels so as to receive direct world television broadcasts.

Government Team Calls Nigeria Visit 'Positive'

EA1103164093 Khartoum SUNA in English 0938 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Khartoum, 11 Mar (SUNA)—The speaker of the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) and head of the government delegation to the peace talks, Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, and the accompanying delegation arrived in Khartoum Wednesday [10 March] evening following a two-day visit to Nigeria where he handed a written message from the chairman of the RCC [Revolution Command Council], Gen 'Umar al-Bashir, to the Nigerian president, Ibrahim Babangida, on peace efforts and outcome of the talks between the government and the rebels' factions.

Khalifah, in a press statement upon arrival, asserted that the visit was positive, noting that President Babangida has commended the Sudan Government's efforts towards achievement of peace. The tna speaker said preparation for the second round of peace talks in Abuja has fully been completed from the government side. President Babangida will continue endeavours to hold the talks immediately after 'Id al-Fitr, he said.

The Sudan delegation to the peace talks had held a press conference in Abuja on the process of peace. The delegation had also visited Kano in northern Nigeria, met the Sudanese community there and briefed them on the progress of the national work in Sudan.

Kuwait

UN Representative Denies Iraqi Allegations Over Prisoners

LD1103194093 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic
1852 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] United Nations, 8 Mar (KUNA)—Muhammad Abu al-Hasan, Kuwait's permanent representative to the United Nations, has refuted Iraqi allegations over the issue of Kuwaiti prisoners of war and detainees. He stressed that this issue is not a matter of lists and numbers, but rather a humanitarian, moral, and religious one, which explains the Iraqi regime's inability to understand it. He said in a letter to the chairman of the Security Council, in reply to an Iraqi letter to the Council dated 23 December last year: "The Iraqi letter is another attempt to escape the obligations placed upon Iraq by related Security Council resolutions, and to use human beings as a means of blackmail". Al-Hasan stressed the necessity for the Iraqi authorities to abide by the standard procedures and criteria under which the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) operates, if those authorities wish to prove their goodwill, the sincerity of their allegations, and their genuine cooperation with the committee. Abu al-Hassan defined these procedures as publicizing the prisons and places of detention, allowing the ICRC access to them without previous notice, permitting its representatives to meet alone with Kuwaiti prisoners and missing persons, and providing facilities to enable the ICRC to determine the whereabouts and fate of these innocent people.

* Poll: Public Opposes Presence of Arab Forces

93P50097A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
6 Mar 93 p 1

[Text] Kuwait—A public opinion poll has stated that the majority of Kuwaitis oppose the presence of Arab forces in their country. Also, a meeting that the National Assembly's (parliament's) committee on the investigation of the Iraqi invasion decided to hold with the director of the state security agency, Brigadier General Fahd al-Fahd, was postponed due to his being out of the country.

The results of the poll, which was conducted by the Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA), disclosed that 74.87 percent of those polled reject the presence of Arab forces on Kuwaiti territory. Not even 16 percent supported it, at a time when 43.2 percent support the U.S. forces remaining and not being replaced by international forces.

Some 37.8 percent did not rule out a new Iraqi attack on Kuwait, and 72 percent supported the defense agreements that the Kuwaiti Government concluded with Western countries. The poll disclosed that 43.2 percent feel that security stability has been lost.

As for investigating the facts of the invasion, the secretary of the National Assembly and rapporteur of the parliamentary committee, Ahmad Baqir, told AL-HAYAH that summoning the director of the intelligence agency had become necessary to complete the investigation file and close out the military side after receiving all information from military personalities.

He explained that the committee, in its last meeting day before yesterday, had requested that the Kuwaiti military attache in al-Basrah, retired Brigadier General Matar Sa'id, appear before it for the third time to present his information and to respond to the deputies' inquiries.

He said that the retired brigadier general had refused to return to his post after the liberation of Kuwait because of the negligence of the military leadership in its role during the invasion and in making preparations on the border before the Iraqi forces launched their attack on all axes on 12 August 1990.

Deputy Baqir disclosed that the committee is issuing a summons for former Chief of Staff Major General Mazid al-Sani' and retired Chief of Staff Major General Jabir al-Khalid al-Sabah, considering them "the most prominent commanders in the military pyramid during the catastrophe." It will request their appearance before it without needing the permission of the minister of defense because they are considered to be retired from their posts.

It is expected that the committee will provide a preliminary report to the National Assembly before July. The report will set forth the investigations that the committee has conducted as a resource for the parliament's recommendations. However, parliamentary sources said to AL-HAYAH that the committee will not be able to perform its task before July because it has not also opened the informational and financial file on the Iraqi catastrophe.

It might be mentioned that Brig. Gen. al-Fahd has served as director of the state security agency since before the catastrophe, and members of parliament have demanded an accounting of the leaders of the agency and their summons if they have been proved negligent. A number of leaders have answered the committee's demand that they file depositions, including the first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad; the former defense minister, Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad; the former Kuwaiti ambassador to Iraq; and a number of military men.

In addition to that, military sources have affirmed that the al-'Abdali police station (110 km north of Kuwait City) came under fire yesterday, Wednesday, from the Iraqi side, and that the Kuwaiti forces "responded to stop the attack."

PUK's Talabani Gives News Conference

NC1103213093 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic
1925 GMT 11 Mar 93

["Full recording" of news conference by Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], in Kuwait on 10 March]

[Excerpts] [Talabani] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. First of all, I welcome the brothers and sisters in this meeting. I take this opportunity to express my great thanks to His Highness Shaykh Sabah al-Ahamd al-Sabah for inviting me and giving us the opportunity for such a meeting. I believe that the questions should be frank and I promise that my answers will be frank and clear.

There are many reasons the dictatorial Iraqi regime has stayed in power, despite its rejection by the Arabs, the Iraqi people and the international community. The dictatorial regime that has controlled the Iraqi people for so long previously received great international, Arab, and regional support. It was transformed from a snake biting the Iraqi people to a dragon threatening to swallow the region. Therefore, the mission of toppling the regime, if first place an Iraqi duty—a duty falling under the responsibility of the Iraqi people and the opposition forces—has now become a regional and international duty. There should be many conditions for toppling the regime, depending on internal and personal conditions. There are regional and international conditions for toppling it.

Uniting the Iraqi opposition, mobilizing the potentials of the Iraqi people, and introducing them to the battle at the appropriate moment are some of the most important requirements to topple the regime. However, the Iraqi opposition also needs regional and international understanding and support, especially from the Arab brothers because the Iraqi dictatorial regime has stayed in power for such a long time by depending on international and regional support.

I believe that the Iraqi regime is suffering many dangerous and international crises, such as the strangling economic crisis and the fatal isolation of the Iraqi people. As you know, the south, the center, and the north have rebelled against the dictator regime. It is not true that the glorious Iraqi uprising was a Kurdish and Shiite uprising. This uprising was an Iraqi uprising which started in the south and expanded into the center and then included Iraq's Kurdistan in the north of the country.

I have personally heard from a ranking Iraqi official that there isn't a single city in Iraq, except for the city of al-Ramadi, which has not participated in the uprising against the dictator regime. Even Tikrit, the city of the ruling clique, took part in the uprising against the dictatorship.

I believe that the regime is in the last stages of its life. However, we cannot topple a dictator regime with the power of the 'Aflaqite regime in Iraq without a great popular force. We believe that the Iraqi opposition can mobilize the potentials of the Iraqi people, and with the cooperation of some benevolent circles among the Iraqi army and the ruling party, we could do something if the Iraqi opposition receives regional and international support at the right moment. [passage omitted]

[Ibrahim Abu-al-'Ula, correspondent of the MIDDLE EAST NEWS AGENCY] What is the Iraqi opposition's stand on the demarcation of the borders between the State of Kuwait and Iraq?

[Talabani] The Kurdistan Front has clearly, publicly, and without evasion declared its support for all the international resolutions, including that resolution pertaining to the demarcation of borders. We believe that Kuwait is a state and that the Kuwaiti people are entitled to enjoy national sovereignty on their land as delineated in the previous Iraqi-Kuwaiti agreements, which were recently confirmed by the international resolutions. Accordingly, we approve the demarcation of borders as orchestrated by the international committee.

Furthermore, the entire Iraqi opposition declared its support for the international resolutions and pledged to implement these resolutions when it assumes power after the overthrow of the dictatorial regime. This represents a tacit recognition of the resolution pertaining to the demarcation of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti borders.

[VOA correspondent in Kuwait] At the start of your visit to Kuwait, you said that this visit is a manifestation of cooperation between Kuwait and the Iraqi opposition. Did your discussion with the Kuwaiti officials include increasing coordination to a degree that would topple the Iraqi regime? And is there coordination between the Iraqi opposition and the Gulf states in this regard?

[Talabani] I believe that this visit has established the bases of strong friendship and relations of struggle and has paved the way for concluding close coordination and cooperation between Iraq, represented by the Iraqi opposition, which opposes dictatorship, and fraternal Kuwait in all the domains which you have mentioned.

[Unidentified correspondent] Can you guarantee that the Kurdish region in Iraqi Kurdistan will not become a Kurdish state? And why do Turkey and Iran fear this Kurdish reality in northern Iraq as if it will become a state? Can you pledge that the situation in Kurdistan will not change into a state independent from Iraq and others?

[Talabani] This is a sort of a strange question. How can I personally guarantee or swear that this or that thing will not happen? [laughter] However, I can speak on behalf of the Kurdistan Front. Yes, the Kurdistan Front has pledged and can guarantee that the current situation in Iraqi Kurdistan will not change to an independent state split from Iraq for important reasons explained by the Kurdistan Front in its programs, policies, and media. These reasons deal with the international and regional situation as well as with the common interests between the Kurdish and Arab peoples in Iraq. The reasons also touched on the importance of the Kurdish movement in imposing the democratic alternative in Iraq and so forth.

I believe that the Kurdistan Front, and not Jalal Talabani, can guarantee that Iraq will not be partitioned in the north and can also guarantee that Iraqi Kurdistan will remain a part of the one independent, democratic Iraq.

But as to what Iran and Turkey fear, I believe that it would be better to put this question to the Iranian and Turkish ambassadors in Kuwait. If you insist on knowing my opinion, I can tell you that there is a fear of democracy. Iraqi Kurdistan is currently an oasis of democracy and it is a center for the Iraqi opposition. If you visit Kurdistan, you will find all kinds of democracy available to all Iraqis—Arabs, Kurds, Turkomen, Assyrians, and others.

Democracy is something not desired or accepted by all of Iraq's neighbors. Some, and not all, in Iran and Turkey, and I repeat some, fear that the Kurds and the other peoples living in Turkey will follow the example of the Kurds in Iraq and will demand a sort of democracy and federation there.

I reiterate that I visited Tehran and Ankara and met with his excellency the president of Turkey, his eminence Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the foreign ministers, and with senior officials. In fact I did not find that they had any opposition to holding elections in Iraqi Kurdistan or to the establishment of a regional autonomous government within a federal framework of a united Iraq. I did not find any opposition on their part. On the contrary, I found some sort of support, blessing, and willingness to help us. As to their public fears about the partitioning of Iraq, I believe that there are other reasons for this. I believe that Turkey, Iran, and the brothers in Syria know us very well and believe deep down that there is not a secessionist movement in Iraqi Kurdistan and that the Kurdistan Front does not want to partition Iraq but is enthusiastic about Iraqi national unity and about strengthening the independent Iraqi entity. But it might be said that there are other reasons for this claim.

[Unidentified correspondent] [words indistinct].

[Talabani] I gave the information to the brothers in Kuwait and, therefore, you can refer to the responsible Kuwaiti quarters. According to our information, we believe that the brother Kuwaiti prisoners are in several prisons in Iraq and that they are alive. According to our information, the prisoners are in Iraq and we have given this information to the brothers in Kuwait.

[Unidentified correspondent] You clearly specified the future relationship with Kuwait. Other opposition parties have done the same. But there are still parties or groups from which we have not heard a clear view of the future relationship. Is it possible that we will hear or expect a document from the Iraqi National Council that will define this relationship, the borders, the prisoners, compensations, and future relations?

[Talabani] Yes. You should expect this from the United Iraqi Conference but do not expect it from every Tom, Dick, and Harry who calls himself an Iraqi opposition member. I don't believe that there is a single people in the world that has consensus on a single thing. There is, for example, the Maastricht treaty. There are referendums in European countries on it, 51 and 60 per cent reject it. The majority of the Iraqi opposition which is represented by the Iraqi National Conference supports this relationship and will issue a document. There will certainly remain groups from here or there which will not agree to this document and this decision. I hope that you will not expect an Iraqi consensus. There will always be remnants that will have Saddamist and expansionist ideas. For example, if we take other issues, such as the Kurdish issue, the majority approves granting the Iraqi Kurds their rights. There is a minority [changes thought] I have heard from some people that Saddam did not go all the way with you, that instead of using chemical weapons he should have hit you with a nuclear bomb. That was the opinion of an Iraqi opposition person. Therefore, we should not expect a consensus on any decision, including this one. Yes, you can expect a document from the Iraqi National Conference.

[KUWAITI NEWS AGENCY correspondent] Regarding the compensations that Iraq has to pay to Kuwait. Will the Iraqi opposition approve the payment of compensations?

[Talabani] The Iraqi opposition has approved all the UN resolutions against Iraq, including the ones related to Iraqi- Kuwaiti relations. But I believe that when we liberate Iraq from dictatorship and establish a democratic, peaceful Iraqi regime that recognizes Kuwait as a state and its borders and come here, then you will help us with some of the necessary funds to reconstruct Iraq. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

'All' Details of Afghan Agreement Finalized

NC1103180593 Paris AFP in English
1750 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Mecca, Saudi Arabia, March 11 (AFP)—Eight Afghan leaders meeting here Thursday finalized a peace deal struck in Islamabad on Sunday, said Golboddin Hekmatyar of the Hezb-e-Eslami [Islamic Party] mojahedin faction.

Hekmatyar, the prime minister-designate in a new Afghan government, told AFP that the agreement had been reached on "all the details" under discussion.

King, Pakistan's Sharif Sign as Guarantors

BK1203064193 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network
in Urdu 0600 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Saudi King Fahd and Pakistan Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif affixed their signatures as guarantors and witnesses to Afghan peace accord, which is aimed at ending the 11-month-old rivalry for power among Afghan mojahedin factions, this morning. The two leaders signed the accord in the holy city of Mecca at the request of Afghanistan President Borhanoddin Rabbani. All nine factions of the Afghan mojahedin, who have been engaged in intense fighting to assume power since April last year, had signed the peace accord last Sunday.

Speaking on the occasion, the Saudi king and the Pakistani prime minister urged the mojahedin to strictly observe the peace accord. Nawaz Sharif said the signing of the agreement at the holiest place of Islam confirms the fact that the violators of this accord will never be forgiven by history. Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani said King Fahd has promised to assist in the reconstruction of the war-ravaged Afghanistan.

King, Others Speak at Signing Ceremony

LD1203094293 Riyadh SPA in Arabic
0315 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Mecca, 11 Feb (SPA)—King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, received today in Mecca Borhannoddin Rabbani, head of state of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif; Golboddin Hekmatyar, the new prime minister of Afghanistan; and the leaders of the main Afghan Mojahedin factions. The custodian of the two holy mosques gave a suhur [last meal before fasting] banquet for his honorable guests.

After the banquet the custodian of the two holy [mosques] gave a speech at a ceremony for the signing of the Afghan peace accord. He said:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate; prayers be upon the most noble of the prophets and messengers, our prophet Muhammad, may God's prayers and peace be upon him.

Brothers, a welcoming speech may be inadequate for the amity and affection God has enabled us to reach. On this occasion, I would like to thank my dear friend the prime minister of Pakistan, my dear friend the president of Afghanistan, its prime minister and my brothers from Afghanistan who are here. [passage omitted] In my own name and on behalf of the people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia I wish from the depth of my heart that the endeavors you have undertaken will be successful, God willing. As for us, your brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, we stood by you in the past, and now we will be faithful and loving brothers united in the words: Allah is the only God and Mohammad is God's messenger". We hope that concord among the leaders of Afghanistan will continue in a way that is characterized by amity and based on friendship and affinity.

We regard what has happened as incidental events that could have taken place anywhere and at any time. However, we thank God for the concord, amity and loyalty among the leaders and people of Afghanistan, and I wish from the depth of my heart the continuation of this loving affinity. We, the government and people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, will rally around you for the benefit of Islam and Muslims and our friendly country Afghanistan and its friendly people. [passage omitted]

His Highness Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani made the following speech:

[Passage omitted: Praise for God, King Fahd, and thanks for Saudi help during the war against communism] Now that we are meeting again on this blessed night, in the realm of God's ancient house, to renew allegiance, there is no doubt that we want to leave behind past problems and disagreements and to turn a new page in our relations with each other. We should not allow the spilling of blood in Afghanistan to continue. We saw enough blood while we were happily making sacrifices in the fight against communism and the treacherous communist army which inflicted total destruction on our towns and villages.

There has been enough destruction and blood—let us begin a new phase of reconstruction of our country and of consolidation of the rising Islamic state. The agreement we have achieved is important, though implementing its terms is even more important.

On this occasion, I wish to add that we need the support of our brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and the other fraternal Islamic states in acting as guarantors for the implementation of the agreement so as to avoid any further armed resistance against our Islamic state.

There is no doubt many plots are being hatched against us. However, we have hope in God and in our honest and sincere brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and all the other Islamic states which would like to support us in all honesty and sincerity.

Here, I have to add that I am confident that the custodian of the two holy mosques is always thinking about his nation's issues; I am confident that he is always thinking about Afghanistan, in particular, and that he is planning to reconstruct it. We have already heard from him tonight that he plans to help in the reconstruction of Afghanistan in the best possible way, following the destruction visited on it by the treacherous communist aggression. However, our needs are pressing and must be covered immediately. The Afghan people are suffering from hunger, destruction and lack of medicine. We need immediate preliminary assistance. With God's grace, some of the problems that once faced the capital, Kabul...[changes thought] Afghan provinces and their capitals have security and stability so that we can begin reconstruction throughout Afghanistan. As to the capital, we pray to God to bestow on us the grace of security and stability, following this agreement, so that we can begin the reconstruction of all the other provinces. [passage omitted]

The Afghan peace accord, which came as a result of the beneficent efforts of the custodian of the two holy mosques and the prime minister of Pakistan for reconciliation among brother Afghans, was signed in their presence. [passage omitted]

Rabbani Interviewed on Agreement

PM1103164593 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
10 Mar 93 p 10

[Interview with President Borhanoddin Rabbani by 'Abdallah al-Haj in Jeddah; date not given]

[Text] [Al-Haj] What is your impression after the signing of the recent peace agreement? And in what conditions was the Islamabad agreement reached?

[Rabbani] The government exerted tireless efforts to secure a cease-fire. It was helped in this task by the shura council of the influential people after the situation worsened and inhabitants in the capital, Kabul, had been exposed to death by murder or starvation. These conditions coincided with the Defense Ministry's efforts to silence the missile bases shelling the capital from time to time. Then the government called for a cease-fire during the blessed month of Ramadan. Some brothers responded to the call and others did not. The invitation made by Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz gave the government and the various Afghan mojahedin factions the opportunity to revive peace hopes. And extensive contacts began among the Saudi, Pakistani, and Afghan sides to make King Fahd's peace call a success. From the outset the Afghan Government has been eager to provide favorable conditions to ensure the call's success and complete all steps in peace. In this context we accepted Engineer Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (leader of the Hezb-e Eslami-e) [Islamic Party] as prime minister. It was not easy, but we accepted him. With regard to the decision of the shura council of the influential people to choose me as president for two years, we decided that the presidential term be 18 months only; then elections would be held at the end of this period. Anyhow, we are making all possible efforts to make the peace task a success. And I believe that what has been achieved so far is a step along the right road toward restoring peace and security to our country, which has suffered a great deal from the calamities of war. I believe that the stage ahead requires united efforts and sincere work in order to implement what was reached in this agreement. And we very much hope we will turn over that black page of our history and that peace and harmony will replace war and destruction.

[Al-Haj] What are the guarantees that none of the conflicting parties will renege on the peace agreement signed in Islamabad?

[Rabbani] In my view, the most important guarantees are the Hezb-e Eslami-e's commitment to all that was agreed with its Muslim brothers, especially as the fighting which has destroyed Kabul harms all mojahedin, who have found that it is their duty to unite to solve the problem. And I believe that all the parties must adhere to what was agreed in Islamabad. Among the guarantees which should be provided is for us to begin immediately to collect the heavy weapons which are in the factions' possessions and to hand them over to the Defense Ministry to be placed in the care of a committee formed from among field commanders. This is because the missiles and heavy weapons were the source of all the evil and destruction inflicted on the capital. And the wise mojahedin should act as sincere observers of the peace agreement so that none of the parties will break the agreement reached.

[Al-Haj] Some people believe that there is ambiguity in the Islamabad agreement with regard to the president's and prime ministers' powers. What is your opinion?

[Rabbani] According to our Islamic system, all powers are in the president of the republic's hand, then the shura council of the influential people. But because our aim is to involve the other side, we granted the prime minister the power to name and select members of his government in consultation with all the political forces, provided that the matter is then referred to the head of state for endorsement. And with regard to all the cabinet's work, its head should coordinate with the head of state and consult with all mojahedin leaders. And there are issues which are decided by the head of state only.

[Al-Haj] What about the fate and future of the present defense minister, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud?

[Rabbani] I believe that Ahmad Shah Mas'ud's next main task is to be defense minister, because the next critical stage and the nonexistence of a regular army or forces to maintain security require the presence of people like Commander Mas'ud, as he was the main element in opening Kabul to the mojahedin, expelling the communist regime, and organizing the forces which are currently busy trying to restore discipline in the capital. We believe that Ahmad Shah Mas'ud is the right one to occupy the post of defense minister. And any committee to be formed for defense affairs must work under his leadership and take orders from him.

[Al-Haj] Did Engineer Gulbuddin Hekmatyar agree to that?

[Rabbani] What we have agreed is that Ahmad Shah Mas'ud cannot be outside the Defense Ministry and that no committee can have more powers than the Defense Ministry. What is correct is for the defense minister to supervise any committee whose task is to supervise the cease-fire and solve the outstanding problems, first and foremost the task of collecting the weapons from all factions.

[Al-Haj] What about the position of the Uzbek militias which did not participate in the peace talks in Islamabad and thus did not sign the agreement?

[Rabbani] I believe that consultations among all the parties will solve many of the outstanding problems and answer many questions. And we are very hopeful that all problems will solved through consultations.

[Al-Haj] What about your meeting with the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz?

[Rabbani] The meeting was an opportunity to thank him for his initiative through the appeal he addressed to the mojahedin to stop bloodshed. We believe that King Fahd played a major role in helping all the Afghan parties sign the cease-fire agreement. Then he invited us to visit Saudi Arabia to bless our agreement in the holy lands—which prompts us to ensure that what has been achieved so far is a constructive step in the future of Afghanistan and to maintain cooperation and consultation among the mojahedin in order to rebuild Afghanistan, which has been destroyed by occupation and war.

For his part, the custodian of the two holy mosques emphasized to us that he was pleased to receive us after God helped us to end the fighting. And he promised to provide every support to rebuild what war has destroyed.

[Al-Haj] How do you view the Arab and Islamic states' role in rebuilding Afghanistan?

[Rabbani] The mass destruction inflicted on Afghanistan requires the cooperation and contribution of all the Islamic and Arab states in the rebuilding process. This is because Afghanistan is suffering from many problems of everyday life as a result of the destruction of the infrastructure in the past period. While we acknowledge that hard work is awaiting us in the stage ahead, through cooperation with the Islamic states we can achieve a great deal and build what war has destroyed. In this context we pin great hopes on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. And we believe that it can play a crucial role in the rebuilding process. We also believe that the Islamic Conference Organization will play an important role in urging the Islamic states to contribute to this task and support the step we have achieved in Islamabad and holy Mecca.

Sharif, Afghans To Stay Till 13 Mar

BK1103143693 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, has extended his stay in Saudi Arabia till Saturday [13 March]. The Afghan president, Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, and other Afghan leaders have also extended their stay. A foreign office statement issued in Islamabad today said that owing to the extension of the prime minister's stay in Saudi Arabia, his arrival in Tehran has been delayed from Thursday to Saturday. In Tehran, the prime minister and Afghan leaders will hold talks with the Iranian president, Mr. 'Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Afghan, Pakistani Leaders Leave Jeddah

LD1203105793 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1030 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Jeddah, 12 Mar (SPA)—Borhannodin Rabbani, head of state of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and their accompanying delegations; and Golboddin Hekmatyar, the new prime minister of Afghanistan, and the leaders of the Afghan mojahedin factions left Jeddah at dawn today. They were seen off at King 'Abd-al-'Aziz international airport by the Deputy amir of Mecca region, His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud Bin-'Abd-al-Muhsin, a representative of the royal protocol, and a number of officials.

King Fahd Telephones Mubarak on 'Events of the Hour'

LD1103184293 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, today had a telephone contact with his brother, His Excellency President Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, in which he congratulated him on the nearness of arrival of the last 10 days of the blessed month of Ramadan, in addition to discussing the strengthening and consolidation of the fraternal links existing between the two fraternal countries.

During the contact, views were also exchanged on the events of the hour at the Arab and Islamic levels to arrive at whatever could serve the causes of the Arab and Islamic nations, and realize their peoples' aspirations.

AL-RAYAH on Palestinians' Rejection of Talks Invitation

JN1103170093 Manama WAKH in English 1530 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Manama, March 11 (GNA)—Qatari 'AL-RAYAH' newspaper said the Palestinians' rejection of an invitation to attend the resumption of the Arab-Israeli peace talks because of Israel's persistence not to repatriate Palestinian exiles should not be understood as opposition to efforts to find comprehensive peace in the Middle East upon the basis of the U.N. Security Council Resolution 338 and 242. But the Palestinian rejection was a gesture that Palestinians will continue to fight Israel's mass punishment in the occupied Arab territories.

It was absurd to restart the peace talks while Palestinian exiles remained in south Lebanon and the Israelis continued to spurn the U.N. Security Council Resolution 799 which calls for the repatriation of exiles, the newspaper said. It also called for a unified Arab position in the peace talks which showed in the previous eight rounds.

The newspaper said Israel should not be allowed to create fresh cracks in Arab solidarity as cohesion of Arab ranks remained the ultimate objective of the Arab nation.

Caution Urged in Making Accusations in U.S. Bomb Case

PM1203085493 Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 7 Mar 93 pp 1, 34

[Editorial: "Accused and Innocent in U.S. Trade Center Case!"]

[Excerpts] The arrest of one of its citizens on charges of bombing the U.S. financial trade center could be an exciting matter for the Islamic world, because it will provoke a huge media clamor. And perhaps the hidden hands problem could reemerge amid world and Islamic agitation and an exchange of accusations merely because of the emergence of the incident as a link in the chain of so-called international terrorism.

The matter should not rely on just what happened, because the incident exists and the defendants and witnesses are now before the U.S. investigation office, which has not yet provided any evidence to prove the identity of the accused. However, in view of a situation in which facts have been mixed with emotions, we should know how to control ourselves and not to preempt events by giving ready answers to matters which have not yet become clear.

Let us take, for example, the accusation which shook the world when the Israeli terrorist Kahana was killed, and how the accusation was leveled at an Egyptian citizen living in the United States. The investigations, the witnesses' testimonies, and delicate inquires proved that the man was innocent, despite the clamor that followed the incident and the irresponsible accusations that he was the perpetrator. [passage omitted)

For example, the FBI chief could not convict any party or confirm the involvement of a certain state or organization in the incident. Because he knows that leveling such an accusation at someone could expose him to serious legal interrogations and prosecutions which could lead to his dismissal from his post and cause him to bear all the costs and burdens of such an accusation. Whereas any Third World state can level an accusation at a certain party even if he is innocent, without any prosecution or interrogation that could rescue the innocent party.

This should enable us to learn from the developed states' laws, especially if the matter concerns us. So we should not stir up emotions or, for example, look for an alternative conspirator unless we have the documents or can ascertain the nature of the trial and the grounds on which it issued the verdict. This applies precisely to the U.S. bombing incident. Because even if we see the media services trying to move the battle to the Islamic front, it will not affect the nature of the evidence which will be announced by the court, especially in a national security case which has preoccupied all U.S. organs, including the state itself—which makes it impossible to conceal the facts from public opinion or manipulate them for any reason.

True, Israel and the circles supporting it are trying to exploit the incident and true, some other states are trying to exploit the situation in their favor, but wisdom prompts us to be patient and not to follow the pale threads through which the media services are trying to declare something like a war on Muslims. This is because the accusation cannot be proved unless all the threads of the truth are completed. At then we should be able to distinguish all the colors.

King Fahd on Administrative Reform, Hajj

LD1103223693 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Excerpts] King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, has confirmed that efforts are now under way to complete the administrative reorganization which we expect to implement soon. The beloved king made clear that the Consultative [Shura] Council will be, God willing, a real aid to the state in providing sincere advice for the good of the homeland and the citizens. This came in a comprehensive address by King Fahd to his brothers and sons the citizens when he received them, may God safeguard him, at the Al-Salam palace last Monday, and which was published by AL-BILAD, 'UKAZ, and AL-NADWAH today.

King Fahd talked about a number of local issues concerning the affairs of citizens, and about what the state is doing to secure a dignified standard of living for them. [passage omitted noting he referred to development of Mecca and Medina]

In reference to the situation to be implemented in all the regions of the Kingdom, the beloved king said: The intention is now to create 14 regions, each with its own small consultative council consisting of 12-25 persons from the sons of the region from whom we expect good in serving the region and promoting the affairs of its citizens. [passage omitted praising the competence of Saudi men]

King Fahd referred to the big preparations carried out by the state each year to welcome pilgrims and said: We do all we can to prepare the holy land and provide all that is needed by pilgrims to carry out this religious duty as well as possible. He made clear that he will be writing to the leaders of the Islamic nation calling for more cooperation with the Kingdom's government in securing the noble objectives and purposes behind the arrival of pilgrims in this land. [passage omitted saying the Kingdom builds roads to facilitate the pilgrimage]

The custodian of the two holy mosques furthermore asserted that the Kingdom has no wish to limit the entry of Muslims into holy places to perform the hajj. On the contrary, he added, the Kingdom is very eager to allow everyone to come, perform the ordinance of God, and then return safely to his or her country. He then went on to say: Islamic countries should be able to find [better] arrangements for their pilgrims. They should give the opportunity for those who have yet to perform the ordinance to travel to this country instead of allowing some to repeatedly perform an ordinance which they are not required to perform more than once.

The beloved King believed that the cooperation of Islamic countries as well as their understanding of the geographic and natural realities limiting the performance of holy rites will allow better services and equipment which have been provided by the state to Muslims arriving in the country from all over the world. He, may God protect him, urged nationals and residents alike to cooperate with the state and give a chance to their Muslim brothers who will be arriving from all over the world to perform the hajj ordinance since God has already allowed them to perform it several times.

U.S. Aircraft 'Violations' 3-9 March Protested

JN1203122193 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Iraq has protested to the United Nations the continued violations of Iraqi airspace by U.S. aircraft.

A memorandum addressed to the UN secretary general says that U.S. aircraft, between 3 and 9 March, carried out 520 sorties over various areas in Iraq for surveillance and provocation purposes. Iraq asked that the memorandum be considered a UN Security Council document.

Foreign Ministry Regrets Zambian Decision To Sever Ties

JN1103213893 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2100 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, 11 Mar (INA)—Iraq regrets the decision made by Zambian President Frederick Chiluba's government to sever diplomatic ties with Iraq. The Iraqi Foreign Ministry said in a statement issued today that this decision by Chiluba's government betrays selfish and exposed political intentions and purposes. Iraq held Chiluba's government responsible for the consequences of this decision, which harms the ties of friendship existing between the Iraqi and Zambian peoples. The Zambian president's government took a convulsive and negative measure on 11 March when it decided to sever its diplomatic relations with Iraq based on weak and baseless pretexts claiming that there is interference in the internal affairs of Zambia and that Iraq supports the Zambian opposition parties, particularly the National Independence Party [words indistinct]. The Iraqi Foreign Ministry on 9 March unequivocally denied the Zambian president's statement of 4 March, in which he unjustifiably mentioned Iraq's name when he was speaking about the internal problems of his country.

PLO Radio Views Obstacles to 'Settlement Negotiations'

JN0603194293 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1733 GMT 6 Mar 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Brothers, no one can ignore that throughout the years of the odious occupation leading up to the settlement [al-taswiyah] negotiations, the Zionist enemy has persisted in adopting all methods of repression, collective punishment, and expulsion beside stepping up its settlement activities to impose new facts on the ground. These new facts will constitute new obstacles that the Zionist enemy will place in front of the Arab and Palestinian negotiator to undermine the negotiations and sidestep any resolution that may compel it to give in to international legitimacy and respond to the logic of acknowledging Palestinian and Arab rights.

The deportee issue is one of the major obstacles the Zionist enemy brings to the negotiating table, through which it seeks to weaken the Arab negotiating stand by having the Arab side give in to its conditions. From this premise, the deportee issue now dictates the adoption of a unified Arab stand toward the continuation of the settlement negotiations. The latter constitute a basic chapter of the Palestinian cause, which verily is the essence of the conflict and the basis of the Middle East crisis.

The adoption of a unified Arab stand on the deportee issue, calling for the repatriation of all the deportees as soon as possible, is a test of how dedicated the Arabs are and how concerned are they on the unity of the Arab negotiating stand toward the Zionist enemy. Any procrastination or hesitation in adopting such a unified stand, irrespective of the considerations, cannot but express a narrow-mindedness, if not a response to Israeli conditions and a concession at the expense of the entire Arab cause.

Ramadan Addresses Festival on Kurdistan Autonomy Day

JN1103210493 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1510 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 11 Mar (INA)—A central festival was held today on the 23d anniversary of the issuance of the 11 March Declaration and the 19th anniversary of the announcement of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region Law. The festival was held under the slogan "The 11 March Declaration Is Still the Correct Door Through Which the Iraqis and the Sons of Our Kurdish People in Kurdistan Can Express the Human Values In Which They Believe."

Representing President Saddam Husayn at the festival was Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and vice president.

Taha Yasin Ramadan made a spee3h in which he said: On this day 23 years ago, the glorious 17-30 July revolution scored an important national gain, represented by the issuance of the historic 11 March Declaration on a peaceful and democratic resolution of the Kurdish issue. This declaration constituted a solid foundation for national Iraqi unity between the Arabs and Kurds, and translated into practice the principles of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, which was the first political party that recognized the national rights of ethnic minorities in the Arab homeland and equated them with the Arabs, both in terms of rights and obligations. [passage omitted]

Ramadan added: The historic 11 March Declaration was the outcome of President Saddam Husayn's sincere and honest efforts. The president has employed his leading responsibility in the party and the state to resolve the Kurdish issue. This is not only because this is an important issue in the life of the homeland and citizens, but also because of his excellency's eagerness to grant the Kurdish citizens their national rights. In addition, his excellency the president was then the head of the higher committee for northern region's affairs and the official in charge of finding a national, peaceful, and democratic solution to the Kurdish issue. [passage omitted]

The vice president added that reactionary and dictatorial governments, seeking to export their internal crises to Iraq and to cover their brutal practices against their own people, especially the Kurds, have further complicated the Kurdish issue. He said that this issue been further exacerbated by the stands of agents and unpatriotic perverts who call themselves leaders of the Kurdish movement and who capitalized on the cause of our Kurdish people at a time when they were receiving instructions from their masters in Washington, Tel Aviv, and Tehran.

The RCC member said: It is not our concern to interfere in anybody's affairs. However, we have the right to ask those who show concern for Kurds in Iraq about how much money they have allocated for Kurdish areas in their own countries, what percentage of the national income is represented by such funds, and what projects have they have established in the interest of their Kurdish citizens. Are they not engaged in racial discrimination, even in the distribution of productive and service projects? However, here in Iraq, it is the first time in history that the Kurds tangibly feel that they are attaining their rights, which have been recognized by the glorious 17-30 July revolution stemming from a genuine faith in the fairness and legitimacy of such rights, and that these rights are a natural entitlement, not a favor or a gift.

The vice president added that among all other countries, only the Iraqi leadership has given the Kurds their legitimate rights. In other countries, the Kurds are still suffering from persecution and deprivation and not one of their legitimate rights has been granted. Nor do they enjoy a law that affirms their national identity, as does the autonomy law. Unlike the Kurds of Syria, Turkey, Iran, the former Soviet Union and now the CIS, only the Kurds of Iraq enjoy such privileges.

Taha Yasin Ramadan indicated that through the U.S.-French-British war, the (?agents) wanted to divide Iraq and to sever its northern part from its central and southern parts. Traitors Jalal Talabani and Mas'ud Barzani and their gangs volunteered to tamper with the northern region to turn it into a center for the Zionists, Americans, and their allies, employing the ugliest forms of persecution against our patriotic Kurdish people who stand by their (?national) leadership. [passage indistinct]

Trade Minister on Rationing, Blockade, Hard Currency

JN1003135493 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 8 Mar 93 p 3

[Interview with Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih by Margaret Khamis; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Khamis] Your Excellency the Minister: We know that the enemies have failed to achieve their objectives through the military aggression and the chapter of treachery and treason and all other plots. Their final wager is on the ongoing unjust blockade to tighten the siege on the Iraqi people so as to demoralize and weaken them and eventually fragment their unity. They also want to sever links between the leadership and the people, so that the leadership will remain responsible for people's lives, welfare, and shortages as well. How does the trade minister view Iraq's situation and that of the Iraqi economic home after 32 months of the unjust blockade?

[Salih] Iraq is all right. The Iraqi home is also in good shape, as President Saddam Husayn wanted it to be. God willing, it will remain safe and secure. The state is faithful to its obligations. As far as it is concerned, the Trade Ministry continues to perform its duties and provide food. It is carrying out its mission according to a plan drawn up since the unjust blockade was imposed. [passage omitted]

[Khamis] Let us talk about the ration cards. The Iraqis are totally convinced of the ration card system, which has been a big success in facing the blockade. This system provides necessities for citizens, even if this is at the minimum. It also gives the citizen a sense of security, and this is very important. Citizens are sure that they will receive food supplies, whatever the circumstances. But the ration card is not enough, so will the Iraqi citizen ever find all the items he needs included on the ration cards?

[Salih] If the card were enough and included everything, then what happened to the blockade and why would one need the card in the first place.

[Khamis] I mean adding other basic items and increasing quotas of some items already included on the card. If this happens, then the citizen will not have to go to the market which is depleting his money supply.

[Salih] The items already listed on the card are costing the state large amounts of hard currency. You are a reporter and you know that any addition demands more hard currency, at a time when the blockade has caused the state to lose its source of hard currency. Does this mean that the state should use all the currency in its possession to provide everything on the ration card and provide quotas that meet the big consumer pattern of the Iraqis. Should one think of getting everything within a certain period and then lose everything?

One should receive a part of the basic needs which make life go on and which preserve his life, because sources are not renewable under the blockade.

[Khamis] Whatever you say, but it is simply an ambition.

[Salih] I address the citizen through you to tell him: Would you like to eat everything within a certain period and then find nothing to eat, or would you prefer to get these items within reasonable limits continuously without ever losing them?

[Khamis] We have some suggestions with regard to increasing the items you have referred to. For example, increasing the salaries of employees. Everybody knows that salaries are stolen through the high prices. Some people even said that it is better not to have an increase because what they lose in the market is more than the increase they get. Why does the state not employ these funds to increase the items and distribute them fairly to everybody, whatever the size of the increase?

[Salih] If all the items on the ration card are bought in the Iraqi dinar, then we will hurt the Iraqi dinar and its value, which will deteriorate, because the salary increase is not hard currency which we need to import commodities.

[Khamis] So it is a theoretical and impractical solution.

[Salih] It is certainly impractical. [passage omitted]

Bank Capital Increased on Saddam's Orders

JN1203122693 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Leader President Saddam Husayn has instructed that the capital of the Socialist Bank be increased to 750 million dinars.

Dr. 'Isam Rashid Hubaysh, the bank's general manager, told an IRAQI NEWS AGENCY correspondent that the increase came from his excellency to support the bank, improve its work, and implement its credit plans for the current year. [passage omitted]

Regime Reportedly Killed 2 Nuclear Scientists in Feb

NC1103163293 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Our sources inside Iraq report that tyrant Saddam regime's henchmen killed nuclear scientist Dr. Talal in his home in al-A'zamiyah on the night of 6 February. Another nuclear scientist, Dr. 'Amil, was also killed in his home by gunmen on the night of 20 February. The sources said the two murdered men were nuclear scientists working at al-Za'faraniyah nuclear plant.

These murders were part of an effort to liquidate Iraqi atomic scientists by Saddam's regime. Saddam's intelligence agency also killed Engineer al-Jalabi in Jordan more than two months ago.

Saddam's Son Said To Seize Tobacco Company, Raise Prices

NC1103223193 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Tyrant Saddam's criminal son 'Uday has seized the Somer Tobacco factory and replaced the chairman and some members of the board of directors with new personnel. Informed sources inside Iraq said the tyrant's son also set new cigarette prices, revoked large number of deals and transactions, and concluded new deals with criminal elements loyal to the regime and its security authorities.

The sources said Defense Minister criminal terrorist 'Ali Hasan al-Majid has monopolized the rice and vegetable oil trade. Criminal Watban Ibrahim, the interior minister, has appointed himself responsible for all hotels and night clubs that belong to the regime, especially in al-Habbaniyah City and Jazirat Baghdad, where millions of dinars are squandered on extravagance, entertainment, and dissipation. This takes place while the Iraqi people live in harsh conditions, suffering from starvation, diseases, and destitution because of the Saddam regime's control over the people's resources.

Rabin Leaves for U.S. Amid Opposition

TA1203055393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is on his way to the United States for a nine-day visit. He is due to meet today in Washington with Secretary of State Warren Christopher and on Monday with President Bill Clinton.

In a letter to the prime minister, opposition Knesset members [MK's] have outlined their fears over the concessions he might make and perhaps has already made concerning the future of the Golan Heights. One of the signatories, Likud caucus Chairman Moshe Qatzav met with the prime minister yesterday afternoon and said afterwards his fears were not allayed. David Ze'ev reports:

[Begin Ze'ev recording] In their letter, MK's from the right- wing opposition parties warn the prime minister that, as an elected official, he has an obligation to present to the public any decision, certainly any move, concerning the future of Israel. The MK's say they fear both the prospect of future concessions on the Golan Heights or agreements that have already been made without a debate in the Knesset and the endorsement of the parliament. The specific points raised in the letter include questions whether Rabin has either promised in the past or hinted to be ready to make concessions concerning the Golan Heights in exchange for the following U.S. commitments: loan guarantees; U.S. financial compensation to Golan settlers in the event of a withdrawal; expansion of Haifa Port and the expanded use of the port by ships of the U.S. 6th Fleet; U.S. assurances of investment in the Israeli economy and a U.S. commitment to transfer arms worth $700 million, a promise not implemented by the Bush Administration; and the setting up of warehouses to stockpile U.S. weapons in Israel.

The opposition MK's challenge Rabin over whether he intends to declare, following his meeting with President Clinton on Monday, that Israel is ready to recognize Syrian sovereignty over the Golan Heights or that he is ready to sign an agreement with Damascus on the basis of concessions on the Heights without first coming before the Knesset. [end recording]

Hundreds of Jewish settlers held a noisy protest outside the Ramat Aviv home of the prime minister last night as he left for the airport to fly to the United States. The demonstrators demanded that Israel make no territorial concessions on the Golan Heights. [passage omitted]

Dozens of Jewish settlers from the Qatif Bloc in the Gaza Strip demonstrated last night outside the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv. The settlers called on Prime Minister and Defense Minister Rabin to stay in the United States because, in their opinion, even when he is here he fails to act as defense minister.

Hopes for Understanding With U.S.

TA1203063693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is now on his way to the United States on a 10-day visit. Before leaving, the prime minister said that he hopes to reach an understanding with the U.S. Administration, bring about the resumption of the peace talks, and establish an agreed basis of understanding with the United States regarding future progress in the peace process. Rabin added that he will try to disappoint former Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, who had earlier wished him failure on his trip. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the prime minister was speaking at a farewell party for Major General 'Amram Mitzna', who is resigning from the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] today, after 30 years of service.

'Unrealistic' U.S. Expectations Viewed

TA1203092893 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 12 Mar 93 pp A1, A10

[Report by Ori Nir and 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin left last night for a nine-day visit to the United States, whose highlight will be a meeting with President Bill Clinton. On the eve of the visit, administration officials in Washington took the trouble to prepare the ground with a series of announcements promising that aid to Israel will not be harmed in the coming year. Sources close to the prime minister have stressed in recent days that Rabin does not expect his visit to lead to a breakthrough in the peace process and that the main aim of the visit is to reach an understanding with Clinton on the format for continuing the talks and to obtain support for the principles on which the negotiations have been based up to now.

Prior to the visit, Israeli representatives in the United States have made an intensive effort to lower expectations of the visit, especially because U.S. officials have made it clear that they expect concessions and far-reaching gestures from Rabin on the negotiations with the Palestinians. [passage omitted]

Israeli sources in Washington said yesterday that what U.S. officials said until recently about their expectations of the Rabin visit reflected a superficial and unrealistic view and that there was a total lack of proportion between Washington's expectations and the Rabin's government's ability to maneuver and the flexibility it could show. Therefore, it was reported, it was decided to initiate an information campaign aimed at lowering administration and congressional expectations of the Rabin visit as much as possible. According to the sources, these efforts have already brought about results, since "working level" U.S. officials now understand Rabin's realistic range of flexibility. [passage omitted]

Peres on Goals of Rabin Visit

TA1203060793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has said that the prime minister's trip to the United States is designed to explore the new U.S. Administration's positions on the political process in the Middle East. Peres expressed the view that all the media reports about Syria's readiness to accept a phased Israeli withdrawal from all of the Golan Heights are mere speculation. The foreign minister and the prime minister held a tete-a-tete last night at Ben-Gurion Airport. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports.

[Begin recording] [Raz] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres held a lengthy tete-a-tete. The foreign minister had just returned from Europe, while the prime minister was preparing to leave for the United States. The statements made afterward by Mr. Peres could perhaps hint at the issues Yitzhaq Rabin will focus on in his meetings in Washington.

[Peres] Look, this is the start of a dialogue with the new U.S. Administration and with the President himself, who is the key player in the United States. The American positions, their level of preparedness, and the positions they will present will be explored. In other words, this constitutes our crossing of the threshold with the Clinton Administration. The prime minister's visit is very important also in order to clarify the administration's new agenda and priorities in the wake of the changes that have recently taken place in the world.

[Raz] The foreign minister was also prepared to comment on the Radio Monte Carlo report that Syria is ready to accept a phased Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights on condition that Jerusalem declare in advance its readiness to effect a total pullbak.

[Peres] I think this is mere speculation. I do not believe the Syrians have clarified their positions.

[Raz] As for the Palestinians, the foreign minister cautiously estimated that they will also attend the next round of peace talks. There is still a month and a half before the talks are scheduled to reconvene, Peres noted.

[Peres] I do not think we have heard the final word yet from the Palestinians. I believe they will be making a glaring mistake if they fail to come, and their present statements are still no indication of the position they will adopt when the negotiations are due to resume.

[Raz] The foreign minister has just returned from Europe, which has renewed its courtship of the PLO. Shim'on Peres spoke of a regression in the positions of Britain and Belgium, whose officials are already meeting with senior PLO officials; however, even this, in his opinion, will not harm the prospects of advancing the peace process. [end recording]

NRP Demands Rabin Declare 24-Hour Break in U.S. Talks

TA1203075593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] The NRP [National Religious Party] Knesset faction has called on the prime minister to declare a 24-hour break in his talks with U.S. leaders in order to focus the world's attention on Arab terror.

Knesset Member Zvulun Hammer told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that he will demand that cabinet ministers immediately stop all talk of withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

Shohat Says U.S. Not To Reduce Aid in Fiscal Year 1994

TA1103180393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Finance Minister Avraham Shohat says that U.S. aid to Israel will not be reduced in fiscal year 1994. He made these remarks in a meeting with Israeli journalists in Washington, after meeting his U.S. counterpart, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, and the under secretary of state.

Interviewed by our Washington correspondent Arye Golan, Shohat said that his interlocutors were very keen to know about the reforms in Israel's economy and privatization.

Hamas Member From U.S. Charged in Military Court

TA1103211893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2100 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Charges were filed today in the Ramallah military court against 36-year-old Muhammad Jarrad, a Hamas member from the United States. Correspondent Rina Matzliah reports that Jarrad is charged with activity in a hostile organization and doing a service for this organization. Jarrad and Muhammad Salah, another U.S. citizen of Palestinian extraction, were arrested in Israel about one and one-half months ago on suspicion of having imported into Israel hundreds of thousands of dollars for Hamas activists.

Rabin Interviewed on Talks, Other Issues

PM1103142493 Barcelona LA VANGUARDIA in Spanish 7 Mar 93 pp 8-9

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by Lluis Foix in Jerusalem on 1 March]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Foix] Is terrorism going to change the course of preparations for the peace talks?

[Rabin] Allow me to say that those Israeli citizens were brutally assassinated by a Palestinian fanatic. My policy is to continue the peace talks. I shall carry on fighting terrorism as though there were no peace talks and I shall carry on the peace talks as though there were no terrorism. I believe that all of us taking part in this process should be held back by nothing save the intention to carry on negotiating [sentence as published]. Any excuse to set conditions for resuming talks, as the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] people are trying to do, is unjustified. It leads nowhere. I believe that anyone seeking to solve the problem and not just to patch it up must concentrate on the peace talks. If they take the liberty of continuing with terrorism, we are also at liberty to fight it using all the means which our laws allow.

[Foix] When will the talks resume?

[Rabin] I hope by mid-April and I think no one is doing the other side a favor by pressing for them to be broken off. Making peace is not like giving alms. To make peace you need both sides and both sides must be interested in achieving it. If there is no interest on the part of the Arabs in negotiating, then there will be no peace. Negotiations are the only tool for solving the conflict. So we shall carry on negotiating.

[Foix] What are the crucial issues?

[Rabin] It is not easy to overcome the positions and contradictions of both sides. One must remember that although we are negotiating with Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinians from the territories, the two crucial issues are the position of the Syrians and that of the Palestinians.

[Foix] Why?

[Rabin] The Jordanians, despite their presumed willingness to reach an agreement with Israel, cannot achieve that unless a solution has previously been found between us and the Palestinians. Lebanon will not be able to make peace without getting the green light from Syria.

[Foix] What differences are there between the Syrians and the Palestinians?

[Rabin] There is a big difference between the two. Syria is a country, a state; it has a leader who can make decisions. Its hostility toward Israel notwithstanding, there is a possibility of reaching an agreement with it. With the Palestinians so far there has been no possibility of an agreement because they cannot make decisions without consulting Tunis.

[Foix] What role does Yasir 'Arafat play?

[Rabin] I think the greatest obstacle to peace with the Palestinians is Yasir 'Arafat. He is the one who has not responded positively to what the Palestinians from the territories want, or at least to what I think his delegations are asking for when they want to resume the talks, which is the priority issue. As long as terrorism continues to shake our society, we must use everything the law allows us to guarantee the Israeli people's security. If we Israelis do not feel safe, there is not much chance of peace.

[Foix] You said that Syria is a priority in Israel's foreign policy. How far would you be prepared to go regarding the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Golan Heights?

[Rabin] My government's position, which is different from and more flexible than that of previous governments, is as follows: We are prepared for UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 to be applied in order to achieve peace with Syria. We are willing to withdraw the Israeli armed forces in the Golan Heights to secure, recognized borders.

[Foix] But are they going to be completely withdrawn from the Golan?

[Rabin] We will not enter into talks over the geographical dimension of the withdrawal without receiving positive answers from Syria on two fundamental issues: What do they mean when they talk of peace? Will it be like the peace with Egypt, with open borders, including diplomatic relations, embassies in both capitals, and a policy on Damascus' part to stimulate the normalization of relations? The peace treaty must stand on its own and it will not be influenced by or depend upon what will or will not be achieved thereafter with the Palestinians, the Jordanians, or with any of the other parties with whom we may negotiate.

[Foix] And what does Syria say?

[Rabin] So far Syria has not given us a positive reply on these problems. Until we know what Syria's position is, we will not negotiate the territorial dimension of the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Golan Heights.

[Foix] What do you expect from your visit to the United States? How is Israel going to get along with President Clinton?

[Rabin] I will not comment now, to you, on what I am thinking of telling the U.S. President. Naturally we will talk about three important issues. We will review the important Middle Eastern issues, the good and the bad. The peace talks, our position, and bilateral U.S.-Israeli relations, including strategic agreements, given the special relationship between our two countries.

[Foix] As you know, the issue of the Palestinian deportees in southern Lebanon was not understood in Europe. More than two months after that risky decision of yours, do you think it was worth it?

[Rabin] Undoubtedly. And you ask me that on the day an extremist has assassinated two Israeli citizens in Tel Aviv. It was an action which was more than justified. The temporary expulsion of some 400 Hamas and Islamic Jihad members to South Lebanon was a very tough blow to those extremist terrorist groups. Besides killing many Israelis and Palestinians, the aim of these deportees was to destroy the possibility for peace talks. In any case, terrorism is not going to weaken our will to negotiate. What I will say to you is that we are fully at liberty to adopt all the measures necessary to reduce the painful price which Israelis and Palestinians are paying for the actions of these Islamic extremist and terrorist groups.

[Foix] But do you not think that these Palestinian deportees will serve as a pretext to step up violence in the occupied territories and in Israel?

[Rabin] No, absolutely not. These people would have operated to greater effect inside the territories. We did well to deport them.

[Foix] If there are contacts with Palestinian leaders from the territories, why do you not talk directly with the PLO?

[Rabin] Because it would get us nowhere.

[Foix] Why?

[Rabin] Because I do not believe that the important people in the PLO in Tunis are interested in what we have to do now according to the invitation issued to us at the end of the Madrid conference. Regarding the solution of the problems between the Palestinians and ourselves, it is written and agreed by us and by all those taking part that we must move in two stages: The first is an autonomous interim government for the Palestinians for a transition period of no more than five years.

[Foix] And then?

[Rabin] At the end of that period, which could be less than five years, we and the Palestinians will negotiate a permanent solution. Once we have an interim agreement, the fundamental significance of which will be to give the Palestinian leaders the ability to govern themselves, the 2 million Palestinians living in the territories will have what they have never had before: an independent body to govern them. This body will be responsible for the interests and aspirations of all of them. They will have a budget which will be distributed in accordance with what the autonomous government decides. They will decide everything. Even if it is only from a selfish viewpoint, that must interest them. We will have to see how far the leadership of the Palestinians living in the territories will be capable of negotiating and reaching an agreement with us.

[Foix] Do you support the idea of elections in the territories, in view of the fact that the fundamentalists will be much stronger afterward?

[Rabin] I believe that in the current circumstances elections cannot take place. We will oppose them. If we reach an agreement on autonomy, I believe that the institution that is to be built must be elected as an executive body by the inhabitants of the territories. But if the Palestinians tell us that they cannot hold elections because it is impossible, because there are difficulties... democracy, when all is said and done, cannot be imposed. So we may be able to agree to designate an executive council. But I have to say that my government would prefer it if there are elections. I believe that without elections, the Palestinian leaders living in the territories will not be able to represent their people nor to appear to the world as a convincing leadership.

[Foix] Do you think that a comprehensive peace in the Middle East can be achieved?

[Rabin] A comprehensive peace can only be the result of bilateral agreements with each of the countries. If the talks which we hope to resume prosper, we will reach concrete agreements with Jordan, Syria, and the Palestinians. With Egypt we already have relations. We do not know how Iraq or the Gulf monarchies will respond. I am sure Iran will oppose it. But the case of Egypt supports this theory. Lasting peace can only be built if concrete agreements are reached.

[Foix] How would you describe your government's policy toward Iran? Is it a decisive factor for stability in the region?

[Rabin] Iran has a megalomaniac desire to dominate. Let us not forget that in the shah's time something very similar was happening. The difference is that the people currently in power in Tehran, as used to be the case with the USSR, have a clearly defined ideology and strategic interests.

[Foix] How is that put into practice?

[Rabin] Iran today has a strategic interest in turning into a dominating power in the Middle East. And the ideology is Khomeyni-ism, in other words extreme Islamic fanaticism. To put it into practice terrorism is used in any circumstance likely to further its interests. If you observe the situation in the Muslim world, you will see that Algeria is on the verge of falling into the hands of an Islamic fundamentalist regime. In Tunisia the fundamentalists, all of them Tunisian, are engaging in frenetic activity to change the political system.

[Foix] But Egypt is a country with a great capacity for resistance.

[Rabin] Yes, but in Egypt there are frequent attacks accompanied by Islamic fanatics preaching in the university and in all the educational and opinion-forming centers. The Islamic extremists in Egypt have taken over Lenin's famous maxim: "The worst for the people is the best for us." Why? Because ideological movements of this type, communism or the radical Islamic interpretation of the Koran, can only flourish in the fertile terrain of social and economic difficulties. In Egypt, for example, all foreign students are warned not to go to its universities so as not to contaminate Egypt's sacred soil. A few days ago a bomb went off in a Cairo restaurant killing three foreign tourists and an Egyptian. Mubarak's government knows that that is very serious for its economy and its internal security. Its laws against Islamic terrorist groups are very stringent.

[Foix] Do you think that the threat to the region's security and stability is so great?

[Rabin] All those Islamic movements in the three North African countries have established very close relations with Sudan, which has become Iran's bridgehead in the African countries. In Jordan it is no secret: 33 of the 80 seats in parliament are occupied by Islamic movements, and certainly many more will be added to them at the next election. In Lebanon there is Hizballah. Among the Palestinians there is Hamas.

[Foix] What connection do they have with Iran?

[Rabin] They all have permanent representatives in Iran. They are all funded by Iran. We believe that Hamas and Islamic Jihad receive $30 million a year from Tehran. Iran's entire political orientation is toward military preparations, with conventional or nonconventional armed forces, and with major arms contracts with Russia. China is building nuclear plants which are currently defined as being for civilian use. North Korea sends them Scud missiles and they have an agreement to build new surface-to-surface missiles. They are preparing the ground by building a strong military apparatus.

[Foix] Will they be able to make nuclear weapons?

[Rabin] I do not think they will have nuclear weapons before the year 2000 unless they get the technology and the aid of many technicians from former Soviet republics.

[Foix] Why does Israel not make common cause with Egypt, Morocco, or Algeria to fight this fundamentalist threat?

[Rabin] I very much doubt whether Israel can do it. Two months ago a meeting was held in Tunis between Egyptian, Algerian, and Tunisian representatives with the clear aim of coordinating their activities against Islamic extremist and terrorist groups. I do not think it will be of much use unless an international commission is set up under the chairmanship of the United States. I do not believe that much can be done against these radical movements.

[Foix] What role does Iraq play in all this?

[Rabin] It was Saddam Husayn who gave Iran greater importance by declaring war on it for control of some border territories. He was the big loser. His nondenominational principles have not triumphed anywhere. Now he is being hounded from within and without.

[Foix] Your government is more dependent on the United States than on Europe. You, in particular, are a great pro-American. Do you think Europe can play any role in this crisis?

[Rabin] Anyone who can contribute to the resumption of the peace talks and to their final success is to be welcomed. But allow me to be frank with you. The United States today is the only superpower. No UN action can be successfully carried out without the direct support of the U.S. President. In today's international context, the United States has a duty and an obligation to come up with solutions for the world's great problems.

[Foix] But Europe has political and diplomatic importance.

[Rabin] Yes, but it cannot tackle the problem of the former Yugoslavia without seeking U.S. help. Israel has a debt toward the U.S. people and the administration. The special relations which exist between our two countries have not been restricted to words. If we receive credits of $3 billion a year to maintain Israel's military strength and to help us economically with the project for antimissile missiles which is 70 percent funded by the United States, you will understand the reason for these special relations. Also, the United States and Israel share values, views on life-style, democracy...

[Foix] What is Europe's role in the East?

[Rabin] I think Europe's position is still a little more inclined toward the Arab cause than ours.

[Foix] Are you saying that the Europeans help the Arabs more than Israel?

[Rabin] That is not it. What I am saying is that in their attitude toward the solution of our conflict they have greater understanding for the Arab position than for ours. And here there is a very marked difference compared to the United States which also, on account of its role as arbiter, has to take into consideration the Arab positions.

[Foix] What is your judgment of President Clinton's position toward Israel?

[Rabin] If I have to judge by the secretary of state's recent visit, I think that the need to achieve peace is taken very seriously. I am not saying that they wish to impose peace, because anything imposed does not last, and so it is not peace. You know that to reach an agreement it is necessary for both sides to be agreed, to sign, and then to abide by it.

[Foix] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher gave a very positive impression of Syria's position.

[Rabin] Indeed, the U.S. secretary of state came back with a very good impression regarding Syria's willingness to resume peace talks. I did not hear Mr. Christopher on the Syrians' specific position with regard to the issues I mentioned to you earlier. Partly because the aim of his trip was not to go into detail but to make it possible for the talks to resume.

[Foix] What is going on with the half a million Jews who recently arrived from Russia? How does this massive immigration affect the economy, unemployment, and coexistence?

[Rabin] I believe that the population increase in Israel, especially of Jews, is very positive for our future. We are a country of just over 5 million inhabitants. This massive arrival of new citizens makes us stronger, despite the enormous problems it brings with it. In order to achieve peace we must be strong, as much from a demographic as from an economic, social, and military viewpoint. [passage omitted]

Beilin on Talks in UK, Golan Withdrawal

TA1103170693 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin in London, by Yaron Wilensky and Ya'el Dan—live]

[Text] [Wilensky] Mr. Beilin, you met today with Douglas Hogg, British minister of state for foreign affairs. Several days after he met PLO officials, stabbings here continue; three men were attacked since last night. What did you tell him?

[Beilin] This morning, I met Douglas Hurd, British secretary of state for foreign affairs. The talk was also attended by Douglas Hogg, and later I met him separately. The issues raised in the discussions mainly revolved around our ability to promote the peace process, against the background of the grave acts of those opposing peace in our region, and the Palestinian rejection of the invitation to the peace talks. We would like to make efforts to have the talks started on 20 April, while we see the elements that believe peace poses a threat to them intensify their activity because they fear that there is a real possibility of attaining an arrangement.

[Wilensky] What message did the British relay to you? Do they really intend to raise the level of the contacts and continue their discussions with the PLO?

[Beilin] They did not say that this will continue, they do not see that as some sort of a process, although they did not say the opposite. The British officials claimed that such discussions give them a little better understanding of the Palestinian demands and conditions for their return to the talks. I told them that they are making a mistake. At a time like this, when the Palestinians are due to respond to the U.S.-Russian invitations to attend the peace talks, such moves make the Palestinians believe in the illusion that they could obtain something in Europe that they were unable to obtain from the United States or Israel. This is just what might delay a positive reply, not promote it. I believe that the fact that two days after the meeting, the Palestinians issued a negative reply indicates that a mistake was made.

On the other hand, I talked to them about their possible activity in the economic and multilateral aspects of the peace process—a role Europe and mainly Britain could play. I also raised issues that are important to us directly, such as a much more determined struggle against the Arab boycott, which they started several months ago, but let go.

[Dan] In other words, do you believe this European-PLO rapprochement works against us and slows down the pace of the Palestinian return to the negotiating table?

[Beilin] I believe that raising the level of the discussions between Britain and the PLO creates an illusion in which the Palestinians believe Europe can give them something today, and thus...

[Dan, interrupting] Why an illusion? Can they given them nothing?

[Beilin] Britain cannot give them anything. On the bilateral level, the only ones who can given them anything are us or the Americans. This is why they met with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and raised several demands; this is why they are asking things of us. Britain can somewhat help on the multilateral level. On the bilateral level they can only give them a gesture such as raising the level of talks, which symbolically may be important, but does not have much practical substance.

[Wilensky] Deputy Minister Beilin, I would like to read out to you the item that opened our newscast today: The Syrian foreign minister today announced in Cairo that his country would be willing to accept an Israeli phased withdrawal from the Golan Heights, provided it leads to a total withdrawal. Radio Monte Carlo reports that Egypt has handed al-Shar' an Israeli offer to end the state of war between the two countries, and carry out a phased withdrawal. According to this report, the plan was handed to Mubarak's adviser Usamah al-Baz during his visit in Israel.

You met al-Baz when he was in Israel. Was any such plan handed to him?

[Beilin] No, I did not give him anything of that kind. Incidentally, Radio Monte Carlo carries similar such reports on occasion, and I doubt its credibility. At the same time, I must admit that the fact that such reports are published at all, certainly when the Syrian Foreign Minister al-Shar' is quoted in them, is of great importance. This means that there is readiness in Syria to make a shift, and a serious one at that. Although this specific report may not be true, I certainly believe that we have things to discuss with the Syrians. They are demanding things of us which we are not ready to give them, but their willingness to hold serious discussions with us, as well as the very idea of phased moves, is also important. I believe there are advantages here for us as well. That is why I welcome this report.

[Dan] Is there a joint plan in the works in some contacts between the two countries?

[Beilin] As far as I know, there was no such thing in the contacts between the countries. Still, the idea of a phased process has certainly been around for many years, and I do not consider it negative.

[Dan] Does that mean that Israel is saying it is ready for a total, phased, withdrawal?

[Beilin] No, no. Israel has never said that. Just the opposite: We made it clear that we are ready to make a withdrawal on the Golan, not from it. Still, we are not negotiating here in the media...

[Dan, interrupting] We are only trying to understand the meaning of the reports we are receiving.

[Beilin] Then let me tell you: There is a role for the media, and there is the level of substantive negotiations. The media is very important because what you tell the media is of significance for the real negotiations as well. We have been saying, in public and in private, that there is a willingness on our part to accept the notion of a withdrawal on the Golan Heights. They have been telling the media that they are ready for some phased move. We say: We will not get off the Golan Heights. They say: There will be no solution without the entire Golan Heights. Still, considering everything that has already been published—on the one hand, our willingness to accept the principle of withdrawal, and on the other hand, their acceptance of the notion of gradual moves—I certainly feel optimistic with regard to the chances of attaining something between the parties, perhaps during the next several months. This is one of the reasons why we believe that we can reach an agreement with them in 1993.

[Wilensky] We will wait and see. Thank you, Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin.

[Beilin] Thank you.

Rabin Views Iranian, Iraqi Threat, Gaza Terror

TA1203122993 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 12 Mar 93 p 15

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by Hemi Shalev at the prime minister's bureau on 10 March]

[Excerpts] [Shalev] Several weeks ago, you discussed the Iranian threat in the Knesset. The chief of staff, on the other hand, does not maintain that Iran is Israel's immediate enemy and says that he would pay closer attention to Iraq. Which is Israel's greatest enemy?

[Rabin] Both countries are Israel's enemies, by their own definition. Iran calls the United States "the great satan" and Israel "the lesser satan." Iraq took part in almost every war against Israel. But we should draw a distinction here: Iran is not a short-term military enemy, except for its ability to launch a couple of Scud missiles; I cannot say the same about Iraq. It is an enemy with military potential, despite the fact that it was badly hurt in the Gulf war.

In the short run, five to seven years, the threat to Israel comes from the Arab world that has not yet made peace agreements with us. Military threats, if they exist, come from Syria, with a possible limited participation by Iraq and Jordan. I am dealing here only with a potential threat, because I do not believe there is an imminent one. This, however, does not apply to terror: the Palestinians, Hizballah, fundamentalist Muslims, and the Iranians, who can assist terrorists and, I believe, did aid in the bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires.

As for the longer run—seven, 10, or 15 years: The way things look today, Iran hopes to boost its conventional and nonconventional power; it has megalomaniac tendencies of becoming the Middle Eastern superpower, while exploiting radical Islam in all its aspects to destabilize Arab regimes. This might constitute a different threat to Israel. They have been dealing with the development of weapons of mass destruction: chemical, biological, and nuclear. If this continues at more or less the same pace it has maintained so far, it is a matter of some 10 years.

Nevertheless, an look at the Arab world over the past 40 years shows threats that have been carried out but also some that seemed great but have not materialized. Today, fundamentalist Islam almost everywhere is backed by Iran: Hizballah in Lebanon; Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in Jordan. Sudan, which is today a key country regarding fundamentalist Muslim activity in Egypt, Tunis, and Algeria, is backed by an Iranian presence on its soil. All the threats by all types of fundamentalist Islam are backed by Iran.

[Shalev] Including New York?

[Rabin] I do not know about that; I am speaking about the Middle East. Our problem is how soon can we reach peace agreements or the neutralization of hostilities with the immediate circle around us, before the threat from the more distant circle intensifies. The question is: Will we succeed in slowing down the pace at which the threat from the more distant circle is building up and postpone it? We may ask: If we attain peace with the countries around us....

[Shalev] Including Iraq?

[Rabin] Not including Iraq. This is not relevant at the moment. How will this help to reduce the threat originating in Iran? After all, unlike Iraq, Iran shares an ideological-religious background with all the extreme Muslim movements, while Iraq has no such branches. Iran influences Hizballah; it can influence Hamas and the radical Muslims in Jordan. I believe the Hashemite regime is stable and will last, but if something unexpected happens tomorrow and, God forbid, this regime collapses, it will not be the PLO that will assume power in Jordan; it will be fundamentalist Islam. If you ask me, there is some threat to the Egyptian regime as well, and I am speaking of only the radical Muslim fundamentalists.

The problem is how to put off the Iranian threat—as well as the Iraqi threat, which is limited today by international supervision and sanctions—by establishing peace relations or making practical progress toward peace with the surrounding countries which would join the peace with Egypt. I believe that such moves will reduce the long-term threats, because you need assistance in the region when you are 1,200 km away from Israel.

We must not forget Libya, but it is farther away. Libya, as well as Iran and Syria, is closely tied with North Korea. It provides them with Scud-C missiles, including technology and production systems. They are also in contact with North Korea on extending the range of a missile that now reaches 1,000 km. After all, if you want to launch a missile at us from Iran or Libya, it must have a range of some 1,200-1,400 km.

[Shalev] Is the West, headed by the United States, aware of these threats and is it acting accordingly? Do you have an operational plan to offer the Americans in this respect?

[Rabin] I believe that awareness of the threat posed by radical Islam and its link with Iran has grown. Undoubtedly, the New York bombing served as an example of the distance fundamentalist Muslim terror can reach. I believe that efforts were made in this respect, mainly by the United States, in the direction of China, Russia, and European countries that have an interest in at least commercial ties with Iran. Iran has money; it sells a lot of oil.

This is a complicated enterprise which should operate for a long time. I believe that the United States, and mainly the Clinton administration—and I will have a good opportunity to understand it better in my upcoming U.S. visit —views the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means for their dispatch, mainly surface-to-surface missiles, as a central issue of its policies. [passage omitted]

[Shalev] What about your promise to provide personal security?

[Rabin] Regarding terror, I have always thought that there is no answer, in fact. There is no answer to terror without a political solution. We may fight it better occasionally, but when it is perpetrated by an individual—a Palestinian murderer who has no security record, who was never involved in anything, who suddenly goes wild and becomes a terrible assassin—there is nothing we can do except seal off the Gaza Strip.

[Shalev] The deputy chief of staff told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee yesterday that the inspections held at the Erez checkpoint are inefficient.

[Rabin] They are not airtight. You cannot carry out flawless inspections of 30,000 or 40,000 people unless you spend two days doing it. There was a specific case in which there was a malfunction. The magnetic card expires on a certain date; when it is run through the machine it beeps, and in this case it did not. Even if it had and he had requested an extension, he would have gotten it, because there was no reason to suspect him, except for his being a Gaza Palestinian.

Basically, if there is no separation, there is no answer to such incidents. A separation can be a closure—which would lead to an explosion, because it would turn Gaza into a giant detention camp, without an economic solution—or a political separation.

[Shalev] But autonomy will not create a separation.

[Rabin] Autonomy will be the beginning of a political solution, and I hope it will reduce the motivation of the vast majority. Furthermore, through autonomy, the Palestinians will be getting what no Arab country has ever given them when it was in power there.

[Shalev] Still, there will be Palestinians who will not approve of the political path.

[Rabin] I hope that with regard to the establishment of autonomy, Arab and international financial resources will be found and invested in the territories to create places of employment there, which will reduce the number of Palestinians coming to work in Israel. This will be good for unemployment in Israel and for the Israeli economy, which will stop relaying on cheap Palestinian labor, and will give the Israeli economy a new direction. Unfortunately, today, when we impose a closure on the Gaza Strip, the loudest cries of protest come not from the Palestinians but from the Israeli employers in agriculture, hotels, and construction.

[Shalev] Perhaps the public is fed up with Gaza? Perhaps there is a consensus that we should leave it?

[Rabin] Leaving Gaza is not a problem, though I would like to secure a political agreement. A unilateral withdrawal from Gaza will get us out (though it will be difficult to leave the settlers there without the Army's protection), but will also close down Gaza. This is neither an answer nor a solution. We should thin out and redeploy our forces there, and we should do that in the context of a political solution to which the other side—the Palestinians in this case—agrees. [passage omitted]

Envoy Informs UN of Steps To Improve Life in Territories

*TA1203062393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English
0500 GMT 12 Mar 93*

[Text] Israel has informed UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali of a series of steps it has taken to improve the quality of life of Arab residents in the territories. In a letter, Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations Gad Ya'aqobi says the measures were taken to build confidence.

Qol Yisra'el's reporter says they include the elimination of restrictions on foreign currency income, the opening of four branches of the Cairo-Amman Bank, and the authorization to a group of businessmen from the West Bank to set up a new commercial bank. Justice Minister David Liba'i has also canceled administrative detention orders of over six months. Israel has also endorsed the opening of some 350 new factories in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Envoy Faulted for Kyrgyzstan Reversal on Embassy

*TA1103080993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English
0500 GMT 11 Mar 93*

[Text] Kyrgyzstan has reversed its decision to set up an embassy in Jerusalem, and it says it will not open an embassy in Israel for the time being.

Our reporter says that sources in the Foreign Ministry are blaming the diplomatic muddle on Israel's ambassador in Kazakhstan, Benz Karmel. The sources say Karmel convinced the Kyrgyzstanis to put their embassy in Jerusalem, even though the Foreign Ministry warned that Kyrgyzstan would most likely be unable to carry through.

The Foreign Ministry officials noted that Benz Karmel is not a professional diplomat but rather a Labor party activist from Beersheba, who received his position as a political appointment.

Foreign Ministry Director Heads Delegation to Hanoi

TA1203094193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Foreign Ministry Director General Yosef Hadas left this morning for Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, at the head of a delegation that includes diplomats, businessmen, and a doctor. Speaking at Ben-Gurion Airport, Director General Hadas said he hopes his trip to Hanoi will lead to cooperation with Vietnam in various fields and facilitate the establishment of diplomatic relations.

A Vietnamese delegation toured Israel last year, and members of the Israel-Asia Chamber of Commerce have visited Hanoi.

Peres Will Stop Deportation if Palestinians Halt Terror

TA1103162793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has said that Israel is prepared to undertake to stop the policy of deportations from the territories, but for their part the Palestinians must renounce violence and terror. Peres was speaking in Bonn, at a rally of students held by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. He added that the Palestinians should hold free elections in the territories, and that Israel would negotiate with any representatives elected by them, initially about an interim solution and five years later about a permanent solution.

Israeli Stabbed in Gaza; Tourist Injured Near Hebron

TA1103134593 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] A short while ago, an Israeli citizen was stabbed and slightly injured near the Erez checkpoint in the Gaza Strip. The assailant apparently fled, and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] launched searches in the area. Our military correspondent Netan'el Semrik updates from the studio:

The stabbing took place at 1445 [1245 GMT] in the northern Gaza Strip. An Israeli citizen was stabbed in the industrial zone several hundred meters south of the Erez checkpoint. He was slightly wounded and taken to the Barzilay Hospital in Ashqelon, where he is being treated currently. Our correspondent Roni Sofer has just reported from the Gaza Strip that the security forces were rushed to the site and are holding a briefing on the circumstances of the stabbing. As far as is known, the assailant has not yet been captured, and searches are taking place at the site.

A tourist was lightly injured in a stone-throwing incident in the village of Zahiriyah near Hebron. The stones smashed the car's windshield. The tourist was treated in a military clinic. The IDF imposed a curfew on the village. This was reported by our correspondent in the territories Udi Segal.

Jewish Woman Found Murdered Near Khan Yunus

TA1203061493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] A Jewish woman was murdered this morning in the vicinity of Morag Junction, near Khan Yunus. There are still no details as to her identity.

Our correspondents Moshe Nussbaum and Rina Matzliah report that a short while ago, her body was discovered in a vehicle generally used for transporting laborers from the territories. She was murdered with a sharp instrument.

Head of Central Command Assumes Post, Comments on Terror

TA1203120593 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Major General Nehemya Tamari this morning assumed his post as head of the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] Central Command. Maj. Gen. Tamari said that while he will continue to wage a ruthless battle against armed fugitives, he will at the same time adopt a policy that will permit Palestinian residents to live in safety. Our correspondent in the territories Udi Segal is here with the details.

[Begin recording] [Segal] Maj. Gen. Dani Yatom, the outgoing commander of the Central Command, said that there are ways to combat terrorism. Maj. Gen. Yatom noted that the level of terrorism usually declined in places where determined, tireless, and sophisticated action was taken against armed fugitives. We must find ways to guarantee our success in confronting terrorism in other locations as well, and I am sure that the people responsible for security in those areas will do this and stop this latest wave of terror. Maj. Gen. Yatom commented on the recent wave of terrorist attacks by Arab laborers against their employers.

[Yatom] My advice to these employers is, first of all, to thoroughly check whom they are employing. Some employers, in order to save a few pennies, employ workers who have perpetrated violent crimes or engaged in terrorism. It is very important not to employ such people. In addition, one must always be very much on the alert and prepared. I could definitely recommend replacing the Palestinian workers with other employees in a great many of these places.

[Segal] Maj. Gen. Yatom, who today handed his post over to Maj. Gen. Nehemya Tamari, said that he is leaving the Central Command in good shape and noted the high quality of its personnel. Maj. General Nehemya Tamari said that excellent work had been carried out over the past two years and that he must study the situation in the field before considering any operative changes.

[Tamari] Obviously, any system—particularly a military one—must constantly reexamine itself, especially after a change of commanders; however, we will maintain continuity with regard to the activity conducted here in the past.

[Segal] Addressing the recent terror wave, Maj. Gen. Tamari said that the war against terrorism demands a high level of alertness from everyone—from the sentry, to soldiers on routine patrols, and the special units, all the way up to the highest officers, including himself, the newly appointed commander of the Central Command. [end recording]

Hizballah 'Terrorist' Held in Detention Since Aug

TA1103121993 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 11 Mar 93 p A3

[ITIM report]

[Text] A Lebanese Hizballah terrorist, 24-year-old Musa Hasan al-Zayn, was captured by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] in the security zone in south Lebanon last August. He was brought to Israel for interrogation and detention. This was revealed yesterday when his detention was extended by the Haifa Magistrate's Court.

To date, the suspect has been held under administrative detention in Israel. Justice 'Aminadav Rand ordered that his detention be extended by another 14 days.

Settlers To Stop Hiring Arabs; Opposition Parties React

TA1203124593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] The residents of the Qatif Bloc have decided to stop employing Arab workers from the Gaza Strip as of today. The residents canceled a meeting with Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur and called an emergency meeting after learning of Simha Levi's murder.

The Tzomet Knesset faction congratulated the Qatif Bloc residents on their decision to stop employing Arab laborers. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that Tzomet called on the Israeli public to refrain from employing Arabs. The faction submitted a draft bill obligating anyone employing an Arab worker to pay a special security tax.

The council of Jewish rabbis in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip said that the recent disasters are the result of the government's lack of will to fight terrorism and the signs of weakness it has exhibited.

Our correspondent Mikha'el Tuchfeld adds that the Emunim Movement holds SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] and Interior Minister Arye Der'i responsible for the bloodshed because of the party's continued participation in the government.

Former Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said that the terror wave could be quashed by employing security measures that do not call for capitulation. Shamir explained that the Arabs must be conclusively shown that they cannot attain their goals this way. The former prime minister asserted that the perpetrators of terrorist attacks should not be permitted to leave the scene in one piece. Knesset Member Shamir stressed to Qol Yisra'el that the level of security and the political situation are closely intertwined and, in his opinion, the Arabs must be made to realize that they can only lose from the current state of affairs.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 1100 GMT on 12 March adds that "the right-wing Moledet party says that the continuing spate of terrorist attacks proves that the government has lost control of the security situation in the country. Moledet leader Rehav'am Ze'evi told Qol Yisra'el that the defense minister should immediately prohibit the entry of Arabs from the territories to Israel."]

Commentator Advises Settlers To Abandon Qatif Bloc

TA1103125493 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 11 Mar 93 p B1

[Commentary by Dan Margalit: "The Qatif Bloc Is No Longer Ours"]

[Text] If I were a Qatif Bloc settler I would seal my house, cut off the electricity supply to my hothouses, abandon my fields, and return to the other side of the Green Line. We have no business being there.

This does not stem from the fact that every settler has become a target for Palestinian terrorists or that the Palestinians cannot be trusted any more. We have already witnessed similar terror waves in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It also has nothing to do with the fact that the settlers are seen as foreign occupiers by the local population and as a troublesome and even superfluous element by most of the Israeli public.

The reason for my departure would be the impossible combination of my being a victim of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] murderousness on the one hand and of my being rejected by the Jewish public on the other.

It seems impossible—and perhaps it should even be forbidden—to raise a family under such conditions. It is true that the confrontation line settlements also face dangers. A katyusha launched from Lebanon approximately 10 days ago threatened the lives of children who live in constant danger in the north. The Israelis living along the northern border, however, enjoy the full moral support of the Israeli public in the rear.

Things are different in the Gaza Strip. Over there, the Jewish settlers live in isolation and loneliness, with a pervading sense of having been abandoned by the Israeli public. They also sense that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] cannot, or will not, help them.

The Judaea and Samaria settlers apparently fall under the same category as their Gaza Strip brethren. Numerically, however, the Judaea and Samaria settlers constitute a far greater force. Furthermore, in Judaea and Samaria there is political maneuvering room and uninhabited territory. Shim'on Peres has spoken about the possibility of maintaining the Jewish settlements under Arab rule. Yasir 'Arafat has also dropped a hint in this direction in the past. In Judaea and Samaria, consequently, there is still some hope, whereas in Gaza all is lost. Over there, the writing is painted in red letters on every wall. The dangers facing the settlers will create such a level of anxiety, frustration, and sense of abandonment that it will necessarily result in an increase of deadly violence.

It is possible to predict that the action of Ilan Lesler, the settler who opened fire on Arab workers from Gaza who were returning home, will not remain an isolated incident. A growing sense of despair, buttressed by large stores of weapons, could result in unrestrained but nevertheless well-organized retaliatory acts on the part of the Qatif Bloc settlers. Such an act could turn into a pogrom. One fears that a new chapter will be written in the history of the conflict—a chapter linking the name of Gaza with that of Kishinev. The Qatif Bloc settlers are not bloodthirsty; they simply feel that they have nobody else to rely on. They know that the Army cannot protect every settler.

The political developments are also forcing us to recognize the bleak situation. Some cockeyed optimists still expect a political arrangement. They are afraid of the unilateral withdrawal proposed by Hayim Ramon, Amnon Rubinstein, and Ya'ir Tzaban. Most of the ministers still hope to find a Palestinian authority that will agree to take upon itself the responsibility of maintaining law and order in the Gaza Strip. They do not understand that such an arrangement cannot be worked out in a matter of days, weeks, or even months. Such an arrangement, conditional upon a comprehensive agreement with the PLO and perhaps even with some Hamas elements, will take years to negotiate. Most of the ministers do not realize that the most effective measure to facilitate such negotiations would be an unequivocal announcement that the IDF will implement a full withdrawal from the Gaza Strip within 18 months and that the only trace of its presence will be a high electric fence and Navy vessels patrolling the coast.

Until then, we may find ourselves witness to daily acts of murder by Gaza Strip settlers, which at a certain point could turn into a massacre of the Gaza Strip inhabitants. If this happens, God forbid, it will only facilitate Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. One is tempted to draw a comparison with the Sabra and Shatila massacre, which weakened the IDF's hold in Lebanon and the government's position in Jerusalem, despite the fact that it was perpetrated by Arab Christians.

The Israeli Government will eventually withdraw from Gaza under difficult psychological conditions and with the image of succumbing to terrorism and not standing by the loyal settlers it sent to the Qatif Bloc. This settlement drive, born in the fever of interparty struggles within the Alignment during the days of Yisra'el Galili, has always been an anomaly on the map of the Zionist settlement drive after the Six-Day War.

Any settler who decides to pack up and leave now will only save himself the anguish of being party to a wrong move, totally lacking in forethought.

Rabin Assures Likud Official No Golan Withdrawal Plans

TA1103143093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] On the eve of his departure for the United States, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin conferred with Moshe Qatzav, chairman of the Likud Knesset faction. Rabin told Qatzav he is not taking to Washington any plans whatsoever for a withdrawal on the Golan Heights, and emphasized that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has not drawn up any such plans, either. The prime minister nevertheless noted that he favors a territorial compromise on the Golan Heights, and that he would say as much in his talks with President Clinton.

Mr. Qatzav told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that the meeting left him uneasy since he fears that Mr. Rabin will give in to U.S. pressure. He handed the prime minister a letter from representatives of the Golan settlements saying that he has no mandate to make concessions in the area.

Central Command General Holds News Conference on Security

TA1003145193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Text] General Dani Yatom said we have to take into account the possibility that the peace process will lead to attempted attacks not only by those who oppose it, but also by supporters who will try to use the terrorist weapon in order to push Israel into a corner.

At a news conference to mark the completion of his term as commander of the Central Command, Gen. Yatom said the deportation of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists undermined the organization's infrastructure and made it easier for the security forces to deal with it. He said that Israel will be able to continue deportations in the future, although the process will be more complicated. The commander said that the local population no longer cooperates with fugitives therefore the latter sometimes get dressed up as soldiers from the undercover units. Gen. Yatom also said that 143 wanted men gave themselves up this year. Twenty one were deported to Jordan with their agreement. There are currently 88 wanted men roaming free. Last year, there was a rise in shooting incidents from 132 in 1991 to 151 in 1992, while there was a drop in stonings. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the Gen. Yatom will complete his term later this week and will be appointed the prime minister's military secretary.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1105 GMT on 10 March in an interview with Gen. Yatom, Karmela Menashe asks him to explain what he means when he refers to "a change, an update, in the rules of engagement." In a recorded passage, the general replies: "It would be wrong to disclose what the rules of engagement are, but they are aimed at making sure that our soldiers, who are sent to carry out operations against armed terrorists and fugitives, will face minimum danger and that the operation is performed efficiently."]

Knesset Foreign Affairs Aide on Peace Issues

PM1203090693 Rome L'UNITA in Italian
8 Mar 93 p 13

[Interview with General Uri Or, chairman of the Knesset Foreign and Defense Commission, by Umberto de Giovannangeli; date and place not given]

[Excerpts] [Or] I want Israel to remain a state with a Jewish majority. I do not want the conditions to arise in the not too distant future for another ethnic war like the one that is tearing the former Yugoslavia apart. That is why I feel that sooner or later we should give up certain territories conquered in 1967. [passage omitted]

[De Giovannangeli] Israeli civilians knifed, the Gaza Stip surrounded by the Army of David, Jewish settlers promising to use arms to take revenge on the "Arab criminals." And all this while the affair of the Palestinians expelled from Israel is far from over. In this situation, are words like "dialogue" and "negotiation" still credible?

[Or] I believe they are, but that does not contradict in any way Israel's need and right to use all the means available to fight terrorism.

[De Giovannangeli] Even expulsions?

[Or] Certainly, if they are of use in neutralizing those who preach and practice armed struggle against Israel. No one can question our right to security, our right to defend by every legal means the lives of Israeli citizens threatened, as in recent weeks, by Palestinian fundamentalists.

[De Giovannangeli] But General Or, is that not the same philosophy being propounded by supporters of the "iron fist," the Likud's hawks?

[Or] No, and for a very simple reason: In the view of the right, the "iron fist" is a policy in its own right, linked to a totally military view of Israel's security. Whereas in our view, repressive measures must always be subordinated to a priority political aim: continuing the peace process and reaching a compromise with the Arab countries. The present government really does intend to reach an agreement, while the previous government "used" the negotiations simply to gain time. That does not seem to me to be a minor difference.

[De Giovannangeli] The Palestinians, however, counter that measures such as the expulsion of 415 Islamic activists threaten to wreck the peace process.

[Or] Well, the Palestinians are making two serious errors of judgment: the most important of which is not understanding that neither this nor the most open of governments will ever put the country's security at risk. There is a war on with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], and the stakes are not only Israel's existence and security, but peace in the Middle East. Defeating the fundamentalists is not only in our interest, it should also be in the interest of those Palestinians who really believe in diplomacy and dialogue.

[De Giovannangeli] And what is the second error, General Or?

[Or] Not understanding that the government in power, with all its limitations, is today the most advanced Israeli government possible. If Rabin fails, his place will certainly not be taken by a member of "Peace Now" but, in all probability, by a hard-liner for whom even transitional autonomy for Gaza and the West Bank would be an "intolerable concession."

[De Giovannangeli] The Arab countries involved in the negotiations maintain that an agreement with Israel must be based on the principle of "peace for territories." What is your view on this matter?

[Or] Well, I belong to a party, the Labor Party, which considers it is possible to give up a part of the territories. A party which is much more concerned by the demographic problem than by the geographic one. If there were no Arabs living in the territories, I would not give up even one centimeter of that land. But the Arab presence is there and it is going to increase in the next few years. Not to take it into consideration would mean creating the conditions for a new ethnic war similar to the one that is tearing the former Yugoslavia apart. Whereas what I want is for Israel to remain a democratic state with a large Jewish majority. That is why it is necessary to weigh up the possibility of giving up certain territories. But our withdrawal can only be the result of negotiation, not the basis for it. And that applies both to Gaza and the West Bank and to the Golan Heights.

[De Giovannangeli] What is your assessment of Warren Christopher's recent mission to the Middle East?

[Or] The U.S. secretary of state seems to have achieved the aim he set out to achieve: getting Arab-Israeli dialogue back on the rails. What gives me hope is noting the political realism shown at this delicate juncture by Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, which have agreed to return to the negotiating table without subordinating this decision to the immediate repatriation of all 415 Hamas activists. I hope that the Palestinian delegates will also show the same realism as the Arab partners in the end.

[De Giovannangeli] Recently, Prime Minister Rabin claimed that the greatest danger for the region's security is represented by Iran. Do you share this assessment?

[Or] Certainly. And not only because in the last year Iran has significantly increased its war arsenal, in terms of quality too. But especially because the regime in Tehran is today the great financial backer of Islamic terrorism, from the Palestinians of Hamas, to the Lebanese Hizballah, to the Egyptian "Muslim Brotherhood."

[De Giovannangeli] General Or, do you think it is possible, albeit in the distant future, to achieve peaceful coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians?

[Or] That is what I hope. But the process will be long and difficult. The important thing today is to create the foundations for achieving real peace. That is why I feel that an agreement on the autonomy of the territories is of fundamental importance. A transitional solution, lasting five years, would allow us to build up mutual trust, to get to know each other, and to distrust one another less. Only thus will we be able one day soon to destroy that wall of hate which still divides the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Sources Deny Deportations Foiled Secret Deal on Navigator

TA1203111093 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 12 Mar 93 p 6

[Report by Dafna Vardi in London and Aharon Klein]

[Excerpts] A secret deal, which was due to bring about the release of captive navigator Ron Arad, was foiled by the deportation of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists in December, the British weekly FOREIGN REPORT has reported. At this stage, it is not clear when the contacts will be resumed. [passage omitted]

Defense sources yesterday denied the report in FOREIGN REPORT, calling it "rubbish."

New Head of Army Planning Branch Appointed

TA0803060593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Major General 'Uzi Dayan has been appointed head of the Army's Planning Branch in place of 'Amram Mitzna', who is retiring from active duty. Dayan has held several senior position in infantry and armored units. He holds a BA in mathematics and physics and an MA in research and planning.

Likud Primaries To Be Held 24 Mar

TA1103143393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] The Likud primaries will be held as scheduled, on 24 March. This was decided by the Likud election committee. Our correspondent Sheli Yehimovich reports that following a stormy and lengthy debate, the representatives of Knesset Members Binyamin Begin, Moshe Qatzav, and Ari'el Sharon and of the Liberals decided to support Binyamin Netanyahu's position and rejected the postponement requested by David Levi's followers. No vote was required. Re'uven Rivlin, acting for Levi, remained in the minority.

Deportees' Spokesman Comments on Talks Invitations

NC1103142193 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Palestinian deportees spokesman Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi gave a news conference this morning on the invitations to resume Arab-Israeli peace negotiations in April.

He said: I consider that the invitations from the United States clearly disregard the just nature of the deportees issue. The United States has thus passed a verdict against itself, that it has never been a fair partner who does justice to Arabs and Muslims. The United States allowed Israel to renounce and refuse to implement Resolution 799, which the United States itself drafted.

On the Palestinian delegation's refusal to receive the invitation, he said: We regard this as a positive stance. We have great hopes that the Palestinian delegation's position is consistent with that of the Palestinian people, who reject the peace process outright. This is especially true in light of the Israeli terrorist acts against our people through organized killings, the demolition of houses, the arrests of tens of thousands, the deportations, and the starvation of our people. He added: The Palestinian people don't believe in the initiative or peace negotiations.

Commenting on Arab countries—Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan—announcing that they will adopt a stance after a meeting in Damascus, al-Rantisi said: Yesterday we heard [Syrian Foreign Minister] Faruq al-Shar's statement in Cairo, [Lebanese Foreign Minister] Buwayz' statement in Lebanon, and statements linking the negotiations with the deportees repatriation and on the implementation of Resolution 799. He added: We remain confident that the Arab countries will refuse to submit to the Zionists and will accept nothing short of the implementation of Resolution 799.

On Rabin's visit to Washington and meeting with Christopher and Clinton and his expectations from such a visit, al-Rantisi said: In view of the United States' unlimited support for Israeli terrorism against the Palestinian people, we do not expect any good to come out of this meeting.

On the deportees' plan to escalate measures three months after the deportation, he said: I do not believe our cause has been forgotten. The daily growing action in occupied Palestine by our people who are angry about the crime of deportation is enough evidence. We examine our measures. Perhaps there may be other measures.

Premier on Syrian Role, al-Ta'if Accord

PM1103140093 Paris LE FIGARO in French 10 Mar 93 p4

[Interview with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri by Claude Lorieux in Beirut; date not given]

[Text] Beirut—[Lorieux] You have taken it into your head to reform the civil service. The Lebanese are surprised that you are not starting by tackling corruption which has reigned in some leadership circles since the civil war and the days of the militias?

[Al-Hariri] The civil war ended with a compromise: No winners or losers. The state was the country's weakest element. It is growing stronger. The militias, on the other hand, are growing weaker by the day. But it will take time for the situation to return to what it was before the troubles broke out in 1975. We have a very ambitious program for reforming public service. Parliament has just passed a law governing that. But it is true that we have not disarmed the militias by force. That would have cost too much. The militia leaders have entered the state apparatus and the state is taking control of things again.

[Lorieux] Is this how you intend to combat corruption?

[Al-Hariri] Precisely. The former militia leaders—Walid Junblatt, who is a Druze, and Nabih Birri who is a Shi'ite—want the administration to be cleaned up. They are happy to take part in that enterprise.

[Lorieux] General Michel 'Awn, who is still the most popular opposition leader, has obtained permission from the French Government to live in the Paris region, where many Lebanese live. Does that bother you?

[Al-Hariri] I am not interested in Michel 'Awn. Moreover, the law requires that he spend 5 years outside Lebanon.

[Lorieux] Does he nonetheless have a place in the national reconciliation process which you have started?

[Al-Hariri] He still has 3 years to spend abroad. If he then returns to Lebanon, has supporters, and wins elections, why not?

[Lorieux] What are you doing to reconcile with the state the Christians who boycotted last August's elections because they thought they were manipulated by the Syrians?

[Al-Hariri] I am working for reconciliation. I make no decision without consulting the Christians. But it is not easy because the Christian leaders are divided. Some Christian politicians blacken Lebanon's image. They are thus encouraging the Christians who live here to emigrate and those who live abroad not to return to the country. The result is that the Christian population is likely to diminish. As a Lebanese, I do not want that. This being so, the parlimaent has been elected for 4 years and those who boycotted the last elections will have to wait until the next in order to stand.

[Lorieux] You have visited Damascus four times in a month. Why? Are the Syrians making problems for you?

[Al-Hariri] No, none.

[Lorieux] So why four visits to Damascus?

[Al-Hariri] I will ask you the question. Why not four times? I have never promised not to go to Syria. I have only gone there once on an official visit.

[Lorieux] Everybody thinks that you are going to Damascus to agree with President al-Asad on what line to take.

[Al-Hariri] No. I go there because I have friends. Moreover, I have gone there a great deal over the past 10 years, when I was not in government. The last time, 3 or 4 days ago, I simply went to dine with a friend.

[Lorieux] Do you think you have more freedom than your predecessors with regard to the Syrian Government?

[Al-Hariri] Since I have been prime minister, the Syrians have not interfered. Not at all.

[Lorieux] It is said in Beirut that you did President al-Asad a great service by defusing the social crisis which broke out last spring and by indefinitely postponing the planned redeployment of the Syrian army to the eastern Lebanese plain of al-Biqa'.

[Al-Hariri] Do we need another war? A social war this time? Is it in Lebanon's interests for the social agitation we experienced last year to start over and over again? It is madness!

[Lorieux] The fact remains that that suits the Syrians!

[Al-Hariri] The people you mention think that the more you struggle against Syria, the more nationalist you are. That is a mistake. We must be Lebanese. Not anti-Syrian.

[Lorieux] You could nonetheless have reminded the Syrians that the inter-Lebanese agreements of al-Ta'if (Saudi Arabia) required them to withdraw their troops from the coast to al-Biqa' before the end of 1992.

[Al-Hariri] In al-Ta'if, we were promised considerable aid to rebuild our army and our internal security forces. However, the only aid we had came to us from Syria.

[Lorieux] Did France not give you any aid?

[Al-Hariri] Not France, nor the United States, nor the Arab countries. We received a total of $160 million from Saudi Arabia in the 3 years which followed al-Ta'if.

[Lorieux] Would you go so far as to say that France has abandoned Lebanon?

[Al-Hariri] I can say that the whole world has abandoned Lebanon.

[Lorieux] That does not explain why the Syrians have not withdrawn to al-Biqa'!

[Al-Hariri] That is not the problem. The fact is that I cannot ask them to leave. I have at my disposal 20,000 soldiers and 17,000 members of the internal security forces. They are not well armed or well equipped. I therefore need the Syrian army. When I have really been given aid to equip my armed forces, I will tell the Syrians to go and they will go.

[Lorieux] Would you be afraid of the Muslim, Christian, or Druze militias restarting the war?

[Al-Hariri] Nobody knows what might happen when the security forces are inadequate. This is true in any country, even Switzerland and France.

[Lorieux] In refusing to allow the 410 Palestinians expelled by Israel to enter Lebanon, you said that Lebanon refused to be a "dump" for the Palestinians....

[Al-Hariri] I did not use the word "dump." We joined the Near East peace process to solve all the problems. The Palestinians are one of those problems (there are between 300,000 and 400,000 of them in Lebanon—LE FIGARO editor's note). We think that, once peace has been restored they will have to go back home.

[Lorieux] Israel criticizes you for failing to disarm Hizballah which it regards as a terrorist organization.

[Al-Hariri] Israel talks of Hizballah. I talk of the resistance. Hizballah is just one element of that, alongside the Amal movement and ordinary Lebanese. I reject Israel's demands. Would a French government agree to disarm fighters resisting the occupation of its territory?

[Lorieux] Your name is linked to the plan for rebuilding downtown Beirut. You are accused of being in such a hurry that the archaeological remains of ancient Beirut would soon disappear under a sea of concrete. Are you prepared to slow down the work?

[Al-Hariri] No, I will not slow down or speed up. I will do what is necessary to preserve any archaeological treasures and to build a country.

Hizballah Reminds Egypt of al-Sadat's Fate

NC1203080593 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Hizballah has issued a statement criticizing the Egyptian regime for firing indiscriminately fired on worshipers in an Aswan mosque, which killed and wounded many of them. Citing reports that the attack was unprovoked, as the police force was not threatened or provoked, the statement stresses that it is clear that the incident is connected to the policy of intimidation and repression pursued by the Egyptian regime, not only against the Islamists, but against all the people.

The statement says the recent massacre testifies to the spirit of aggression and hatred not only against Islam, but also against freedom of expression. Emergency laws completely ban all party, trade union, and ideological activities, and even religious activities, which are normal during the blessed month of Ramadan.

The statement denounces the Egyptian regime and calls for exposing its policy, which crushes the Egyptian people's hopes and aspirations and means more subservience to the United States, the Camp David agreements, and relations with the Zionist enemy. The statement stresses that the Egyptian regime's escalation of its confrontation with the Islamists reveals its great predicament and embarrassment as a result of its mistaken policies, which have resulted in Egypt abandoning its Arab and Islamic role and position.

The statement stresses that the Egyptian people's resistance of the policy of normalization with the enemy reveals that this regime has failed to prove its ability to lead the so-called post-Camp David phase. The wicked and vicious onslaught against the Islamists is a result of the regime's annoyance with the forces opposed to its policy. This has prompted the regime to rig the general elections and to suppress political freedoms through the amendment of the parties and trade union laws.

The Hizballah statement says this arrogance inevitably will meet a black fate, not much different from that of Anwar al-Sadat.

Foreign Ministry on Shammas Resignation Request

NC1103203093 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] In the first official comment by the Foreign Ministry on Ambassador Suhayl Shammas' request to be relieved of his duties and the media coverage of this request, the Foreign Ministry's Information Department issued the following clarification:

In the past few days, some Lebanese newspapers published information and analyses on Ambassador Suhayl Shammas', secretary general of the Ministry for Foreign and Expatriates Affairs, request to be relieved of his duties. The ministry denies all the analyses and information which has aroused doubts and suspicions on the ministry and the negotiating delegation's roles and affirms:

First, that the request Secretary General Ambassador Shammas made to be relieved of his duties has absolutely no relation to any political issue of any kind; it is not related to the activities of the negotiating delegation or any other outside issues. The issue revolves around the fact that Ambassador Shammas is approaching the legal age for retirement. His staying on as secretary general of the Foreign Ministry and Lebanon's ambassador in Germany would violate the retirement law or require a new law to be issued by the Chamber of Deputies.

Second, what has been reported about this issue, citing the cabinet, is also untrue. The minister of foreign and expatriates affairs objected to the presentation of the issue because it was not placed on the agenda by the Foreign Ministry. He asked for a postponement of the issue until the heart of the matter is reached and the ministry is informed of the contents of the letter of resignation.

He confirmed that the topic was not discussed in detail in the cabinet. This topic has nothing to do with political issues, nor with issues dealing with the contents of the talks, nor with the Lebanese-Israeli negotiations. The issue is purely legal and administrative.

Therefore, the Ministry of Foreign and Expatriates Affairs asks the media to check their facts before analyzing and evaluating things. Otherwise, its credibility will be harmed.

Southern Areas Hit by Shells, Machine-Gun Fire

NC1103181493 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Several shells fell on the Iqlim al-Tuffah hills, particularly on Mlita Hill, at approximately 1600 today. Shells also landed in al-Luwayzah Town, accompanied by bursts of heavy- caliber machine-gun fire from the occupation positions overlooking the area.

At noon today, the hills east of Jarju' town and the town's main road came under fire from snipers in the occupation positions on Sujud Hill. Traffic on the road has been paralyzed.

'Source' Clarifies Strategy at Peace Negotiations

JN1103124693 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 11 Mar 93 pp 1, 18

[Unattributed "exclusive" report from Damasus]

[Text] A responsible Syrian source has stated that Syria will not sign an agreement that would close the door to liberation in the face of the coming Arab generations. The source added: Do not believe the tendentious rumors, because Syria is still shouldering the pan-Arab dream. Syria's pan-Arab stands are not reflections of the Zionist press reports. The Syrian source said that any solution that does not guarantee withdrawal from Jerusalem before the Golan is absolutely rejected.

These remarks came in a private discussion with AKHBAR AL-USBU' not intended for publication but rather for clarification to explain the principles of Syrian policy. AKHBAR AL-USBU' is publishing this report not to defend the Syrian policy, but to reassure the other Arab parties and prevent them from joining a race to offer concessions because of the lack of mutual trust among these parties.

AKHBAR AL-USBU' is certain that this is the essence of the Syrian policy despite the fact that Syria does not say so. We say that the Syrian media act and do not react to refute rumors and trial balloons.

The Syrian source was pessimistic regarding any progress in the peace negotiations between Syria and Israel in the present circumstances. He denied any progress in the negotiations or even a ray of hope that a peace agreement will be signed between Syria and Israel.

Commenting on the media clamor that is concentrating on Syria at this stage, the source explained certain facts saying: Syria is very satisfied with the developments of the negotiations because the dialogue there is like that of the deaf. Nothing has crystallized yet and the keys to the dialogue have not been agreed upon. Western media misinterpreted what happened when the Syrian-Israeli negotiations reached a dead-end and the United States proposed rewording the questions. The Syrian delegation always began its talks with the Israeli delegation with the following questions: Are you fully prepared to withdraw from the Golan and Jerusalem and give the Palestinians all their rights? The question was repeated without an answer. The United States proposed that this be carried out in the form of a "hypothesis." Then began the phase of "suppose Israel agreed to withdrawal," and the Syrian answer would be: "Suppose Israel agreed to ...." The negotiations revolved around hypotheses and the answers were only hypothetical and did not represent points of agreement. The media misinterpreted the negotiations in an unreasonable way.

When asked about the media clamor over Syria's silence regarding a Syrian-Israeli plan and an Israeli plan for withdrawal from part of the Golan this year, the Syrian official said: Syria is satisfied with this misinterpretation and distortion and is aware of who stands behind it and plays it up with the aim of casting doubt on Syria's stand in order to tempt the other Arab parties to rush forward and accept and grab anything. The mystery behind this Syrian attitude to these erroneous stands is that they serve Syria's future strategy and depict it to international public opinion as serious in its desire to achieve a peace settlement.

The Syrian official asserted that Syria will not sign any agreement with Israel unless withdrawal starts first from Jerusalem, then from Lebanon, and then from the Golan Heights. He said: Syria is fully convinced that peaceful settlements with Israel are impossible because it knows that Rabin is incapable of making a genuine peace and that Syria's going along with the negotiations will give it time to strengthen its resources and wait for future developments that would serve the Syrian position.

The Syrian official added: The negotiations are the best means to block Israel's attempts to push Syria into a tight corner amid unfavorable world and Arab conditions. We are satisfied with these negotiations because they provide time to catch one's breath.

The Syrian official emphasized that Syria is now continuing to bolster its resources and provide the requirements to strengthen itself in all fields. He said: Syria has now postponed many vital projects and kept all of its revenues as reserves for the future developments. Syria has certain tactics that some people consider a violation of, and a departure from, the Syrian strategy. Syria is taking into account what it faces, including the fact that it is on the list of countries supporting terrorism and the fact that it is the only remaining Arab power to face Israel. Syria is also taking into account the arrival of a difficult moment when it tries to foil Israeli and U.S. maneuvers to mobilize world public opinion against it, impose a blockade similar to the one imposed on Iraq and Libya, drive the UN Security Council to issue resolutions to inspect Syrian weapons under the pretext of searching for weapons of mass destruction, and applying very hard pressure.

The Syrian official noted the objectives that the Zionist propaganda seeks to achieve by presenting these hypotheses as if they were undisputed facts. He said that they aim to embarrass Syria. If Syria denies these reports, its position will be considered hostile to peace. But if it remains silent, Arab parties may fall into the Israeli trap.

Asked why there were no attempts to build an Arab position on the basis of the Syrian strategy and inform the concerned Arab states of these principles and stands, the Syrian official said: The problem is not about having confidence in the Israeli enemy. It is, after all, an enemy who cannot be trusted. But the real problem is establishing firm mutual trust among the concerned Arab states. Certain officials were even stupid enough to hope that our position on negotiations would be identical to the position of their country. Such statements amount to an unacceptable questioning of our pan-Arab stands and provide Israel with a weapon to use against Syria. Therefore, we realize that certain Arab parties cannot be trusted and we cannot show them the diplomatic weapons we use in the peace battle in order to deprive Israel of the opportunity to make a preventive strike and foil these weapons. The negotiations, in our view, are a battle in which all weapons are tried against stationary targets. They constitute the point zero in which heated statements are used. If they fail, the battle will turn into a military one. This is what Israel is seeking to achieve because all conditions are in its favor. The Syrian leadership is considering everything very carefully and takes all developments into account. We realize that the peace sought by Israel and the United States means an acceptance of a fait accompli. Such a peace cannot be accepted, not by this generation nor future ones, because it means a peace between the weak and the strong.

The Syrian official added: Rest assured Syria has neither changed its stands nor abandoned its principles. This is the phase of bending to the wind without relinquishing the major objectives or running backward. We are facing and talking to a world now dominated by the United States and Israel. We have no option but to continue with this dialogue of the deaf. We have to take advantage of this time that resulted from various world conditions and employ it to support our steadfastness and the principles of our policy.

We know that regionalism has become an idol before which some Arabs kneel. But as for Syria, it shoulders the pan-Arab dream. We realize that the weakness and deterioration of relations witnessed by the Arab nation these days have made Syria depend on itself in the confrontation. Any kind of Arab support that agrees with Syria's policy is support for the Syrian stand.

We now live in the phase of accepting the minimum stands by Arab states as dictated by their abilities and resources. But we will not be surprised to see ourselves in the end standing alone in the conflict arena, abandoned by the Arabs. We take into account all local, Arab, and international considerations and we will not be intimidated by any provocation. Nor will we be pushed into a confrontation or a battle, whose time, climate, and necessary precautions are not dictated by us.

Our presence in the negotiations provides a safety valve to prevent Israel's taking on each Arab party one at a time. Israel knows that there can be no peace without the approval of Damascus and there can be no war without Damascus. Since we are still in the center of the circle, we realize that danger surrounds us and that Israel is lying in wait for us on all fronts—the negotiations, diplomatic, and military fronts. We have no option in the current phase but to continue to discuss hypotheses in the next rounds of talks. The peace battle, however, is not taking place at the expense of other fields. We continue to increase our national output to reach self-sufficiency in certain fields. We raise the slogan that the requirements of steadfastness and confrontation must come before anything else. Palestine is the yardstick for our relations with any country. The more we agree with any country on that point, the more homogeneous our stands will be, even if there were no agreements in that regard with any fraternal or friendly state.

The Syrian official added: The confrontation with Israel occupies the first priority in our trend, concern, and policy to bolster our military strength because a country like Syria cannot take its people to a phase of prosperity and relaxation while the enemy is only feet away and occupies part of its territory. We are preparing our people for all eventualities and future developments. Our stands are not in reaction to certain events, but are based on convictions, in which we believe and which we employ in the service of our national interest and pan-Arab objectives.

He added: Syria is prepared for all possibilities. We are disappointed with Israel's bragging about peace. We will attend the coming negotiations in Washington, but we refuse to attend the multilaterals because they amount to a normalization and a departure from the objective.

PLO's Qaddumi Welcomes Egyptian, Syrian Support

NC1103223793 Cairo MENA in Arabic
2150 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Damascus, 11 Mar (MENA)—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, has welcomed the announcement by Egypt and Syria that they support the six Palestinian points which constitute the proposal for resolving the Palestinian deportees issue.

Qaddumi, in an exclusive interview with MENA in Syria, said there have been two basic problems that the peace process has encountered. The first one is the belligerent Israeli stand and the second is the failure of the bilateral peace talks to realize any tangible progress on the Palestinian track. These two problems prompted the PLO to ask the Arab brothers not to attend the last, eighth round of bilateral peace talks. However, the brother Arabs decided, at that time, that we should continue the talks to find out the new U.S. Administration's stand.

Qaddumi said the problem of the deportees added fuel to the fire and Palestinian attendance of the bilateral and multilateral talks became a very difficult issue. The whole world strongly condemned Israel for deporting the Palestinian citizens and demanded that they all be returned immediately. However, Israel refused to implement Security Council Resolution 799. This was confirmed by the UN secretary general in his report to the Security Council.

After this, the PLO demanded that sanctions be imposed on Israel, but the United States announced that it had concluded a deal with Israel to return the deportees gradually. The objective of this was to implement the Security Council resolution and adhere to international legitimacy. We insist that Israel adhere to international legitimacy, he said, because otherwise it will not implement Resolution 242 on which the peace process is based.

We called for an urgent meeting of the cordon states to take a united Arab stand. We believe that all the Arabs should boycott the coming, ninth round of the bilateral peace talks and suspend Arab attendance of this round until the United States agrees to confirm the bases on which the peace process was started—former U.S. President George Bush's initiative, which is based on Resolutions 242 and 338 and withdrawal from the occupied territories including Jerusalem.

Qaddumi pointed out that the results of the talks in Jerusalem between the Palestinians inside the occupied territories and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher were not encouraging because Israel insisted on refusing to implement Resolution 799 or to respect international legitimacy.

Qaddumi said that the Palestinian side refuses to accept the American-Russian invitation to attend the coming round of negotiations. He pointed out that this means suspending Palestinian presence in this round. He announced that the PLO will ask the Arab brothers not to attend this round during the five-member ministerial Arab coordination meeting of the cordon states to be held in Damascus after the 'Id al-Fitr [around 22 March].

Effective U.S. Role Needed To End Rabin's 'Game'

JN1003160893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Israeli repression is escalating in the occupied Arab territories in a serious manner that portends more disasters. The Gaza Strip turned into a real battleground where stones and knives are confronting machine guns, tanks, and rockets. Not a single day goes by without scores of Arab citizens being killed or injured by criminal Israeli bullets.

Israeli radio talks night and day about raids by occupation troops against this or that camp, combing operations here or there, and the shooting and injuring of dozens of Palestinians, as if killing Arabs is something acceptable and approved. Meanwhile, Israeli radio moves heaven and earth and issues statements of condemnation when the issue deals with the killing of a single Israeli, be he a military man or a civilian. Moreover, officials in Tel Aviv compete to mourn the fate of this soldier or civilian. They talk about the savageness of Arab violence when a Palestinian stabs an Israeli settler with a knife and deliberately ignore that the Palestinian would not have stabbed the Israeli man had he not lost all or most of his family members to Zionist bullets; had his land not been confiscated; had he not been deprived of the basic means of subsistence; had he not been subjected to various methods of torture, repression, and terrorism; had his dignity not been insulted; had his homeland not been usurped; and had he not become a stranger in his homeland, treated as an unwanted intruder.

What is even worse is that Israeli officials are trying to justify their escalating barbaric war against the Palestinian people by defending the peace process. They depict the Palestinians as enemies of peace. Hence, they reverse matters, as usual, distort reality, and fabricate facts. Rabin's war is an actual one that aims, by perpetrating massacres against the Palestinian people, deporting hundreds of them, demolishing neighborhoods with tank rockets, and terrorizing innocent inhabitants, at dealing a blow to the peace process and creating an explosive climate that would make the Arab parties unable to resume the Washington talks.

Rabin's overriding concern is to push provocations to the limit and embarrass the Palestinian negotiating delegation so that it would not take part in the peace talks, thus paving the way for foiling the efforts already exerted. The act of deporting hundreds of Palestinians to occupied southern Lebanon is just one of Rabin's mines. Moreover, his refusal to comply with Security Council Resolution 799, his flagrant defiance of the international community, and his continued talk about limited withdrawal in exchange for complete peace are additional mines. However, Rabin and other Israeli officials contradict themselves and avoid facing facts. No matter how much the occupiers escalate their crimes and acts of terrorism, they will remain occupiers and will be confronted with more resistance throughout the occupied Arab territories. Tightening repressive measures will only result in escalating struggle. Did they not yesterday claim that deporting hundreds of Palestinians would put an end to the intifadah? Did they not close the Gaza Strip? Has the resistance been weakened? No, it has escalated. Every new day, the Israelis will pay a higher price for their occupation. This is proven by history. Occupation creates resistance and resistance will escalate as long as occupation continues.

The Arab response to the U.S.-Russian initiative provided a unique opportunity for achieving a just, comprehensive, and consecrated peace in the Middle East. However, the rulers of Israel thus far refuse to get into the basics of real peace. They want peace and Arab territories at the same time. The Arabs are linking peace to the full restoration of their land, without relinquishing an inch of it. Security Council resolutions stipulate the full return of the land without ambiguities. The Washington talks were based on these resolutions. Eight rounds of talks were held in a futile attempt to convince the Israeli negotiators to respond to the will of right, justice, and peace. The ninth round is approaching without any signs of tangible change in Israeli policies toward the peace process.

It is clear that Rabin is trying to play the U.S. card to serve his schemes against a just peace, despite what the United States has shown in terms of committing itself to pushing the peace efforts forward and playing the role of a full partner in the negotiations. Rabin wants the United States to become Israel's participant not in the peace process, but in his schemes to strike at this process. Here, an effective U.S. role should become clear in aborting Rabin's game and making the Israelis understand that the continuation of U.S. aid to them depends on respect for human rights in the occupied territories, stopping the serious escalation against the Palestinian people, returning the deportees to their homes, and being committed—in both words and deeds—to the will of peace by way of full compliance with Security Council resolutions.

Press on Peace Process, Invitations, Israel

JN1103100493 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0550 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Press review]

[Text] In its editorial, the newspaper AL-BA'TH stresses that Arabs rallying round pan-Arab constants is a sound stand for establishing a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy. It notes that the peace process, given the bases set for it under the current international situation, is a good arena for pan-Arab struggle to regain land and restore rights, and that relinquishing this battle will eventually be an act that serves Israel which does not want the peace process or peace itself. Nor does Israel want to see the Arabs appear before the world as committed to peace and to international legitimacy.

It adds: The Arabs are now dutybound to close ranks and expose to the world Israel's repressive and brutal face, which is hostile to peace. Only yesterday, Peres admitted before journalists in Europe that Israel's reputation was harmed as a result of the expellees issue.

Concluding, AL-BA'TH says: Weakening the Arab position by fomenting sedition and spreading suspicion among Arabs is an attempt aimed at dealing separately with each Arab side, which is a constant Israeli weapon. Our sharpest and strongest weapon in the peace battle is a unity of stands, coordination, consultation, and joint Arab action. President Hafiz al-Asad's frequent calls on Arabs to achieve solidarity and to unify stands and joint action are based on this strategic view. The sincere response to this lies in an effective and practical reply to all attempts to drive a wedge among Arabs now and in the future.

Commenting on the invitations extended to the parties participating in the Washington talks for holding a ninth round in April, the newspaper TISHRIN stresses that Rabin's acceptance of Resolutions 242 and 338, which were adopted as a basis for the peace process, is insufficient as long as it is not coupled with a commitment to withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

The paper explains that the Israeli prime minister gives erroneous interpretations of the two resolutions contrary to the international unanimity, and believes that by speaking about peace, he can delude world public opinion and acquit Israel of its daily hideous crimes in the occupied Arab territories to stab the peace process and abort the year-long international efforts.

TISHRIN affirms: It is natural that the Arabs adhere to returning the Palestinian expellees to their homeland, especially as the expulsion measure targeted, as all sides agree, the destruction of peace endeavors. The Arabs in general believe that Israel's implementation of Resolution 799 on the return of the expellees is a test to its peaceful intentions.

The paper says: Washington has explained that the invitations extended to the parties to resume peace talks are based on the principles of the Madrid conference, Resolutions 242 and 338, and the assurances the United States has given to achieve a just and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. Simply, this means that the peace process is based on a comprehensive solution on all fronts which is consequently based on the recognition of Palestinian rights and Israel's withdrawal.

TISHRIN adds: The Tel Aviv rulers should realize that the policy of procrastination and prevarication is to no avail and that the Arabs are expecting a timetable for an Israeli withdrawal. They also want to see the Palestinians allowed to exercise their natural rights and to establish their national authority.

The newspaper AL-THAWRAH sheds light on the situation experienced by Arab citizens in the occupied Arab territories before the date proposed for resuming the peace talks in Washington. It comments on giving a free hand to the Israeli army and settlers to wreak havoc in the occupied Arab territories and spread terror and horror among citizens.

The paper says: It is a strange paradox that Israel is perpetrating crimes and massacres, applying the law of the jungle, and flagrantly defying UN resolutions and international law, while its leaders do not hesitate to talk about peace and their desire to continue negotiations with the Arabs to achieve peace.

AL-THAWRAH notes: The international community, which continued to be deceived for a long time by the Israeli propaganda, has finally waken up and begun to realize, although late, that Israel is an aggressive, expansionist entity which usurps the others' land and rights and violates all laws and sanctities for the sake of achieving its evil and aggressive objectives.

AL-THAWRAH says: The futile results of the previous eight rounds of talks gave the international community a great deal of evidence and proof that Israel does not want a peace that is in harmony with the resolutions of international legitimacy and which is just and comprehensive. Nor does it want a peace that restores to the Arabs their land and rights and entrenches an atmosphere of security and stability in the region. Israel is mainly preoccupied with peddling separate and unilateral settlements that respond to its desires and ambitions and allow it to acquire everything without anything in return.

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH says: Logic necessitates that all those who desire to push the peace process forward take into consideration Israel's stand which is hostile to the simplest terms and requirements of peace. They should also realize that ignoring and overlooking Israel's practices and crimes will not achieve peace, but will place the region before the possibilities of the dangers of wars and catastrophes.

Afghanistan

Factional Clashes Resume in Kabul 10-11 Mar

LD1103165093 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] The past 24 hours witnessed intense clashes between Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami [Islamic Unity Party] forces and the Shura-ye Nezar [Supervisory Council] in the vicinity of the former Soviet Embassy in Dehmazang [district of Kabul], near the central silo and foothills of Aliabad mountain.

Clashes also continued between forces of the Shura-ye Nezar and Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] near Pol-e Gozargah and Chehelsotun last night. During this clash the two sides opened heavy artillery fire on each other's positions.

Bangladesh

Kuwaiti Amir's Special Envoy Arrives

BK1103132293 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1230 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] A special envoy of the amir of Kuwait carrying a message for Prime Minister Khaleda Zia arrived in Dhaka today. The envoy, Dr. Ahmad 'Abdallah al-Rab'i, who is also the education minister of Kuwait, is leading a seven-member delegation. On his arrival in Dhaka, the special envoy said that the excellent bilateral relations between Kuwait and Bangladesh will be further strengthened. He is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Khaleda Zia today. The envoy will also call on the president and the foreign minister.

Meets President, Prime Minister

BK1103153793 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1430 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Dr. 'Abdallah al-Rab'i, special envoy of the amir of Kuwait, called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas in Dhaka today and handed over a personal message from the amir of Kuwait, Shaykh Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah. President Biswas conveyed his thanks to the amir for the message and expressed satisfaction over the progress of joint venture projects with Kuwait in Bangladesh. He also expressed the hope that Kuwait will continue to extend its economic assistance for the development of Bangladesh.

The special envoy also called on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia today and handed over a message from the amir of Kuwait. The envoy, Dr. Ahmad 'Abdallah al-Rab'i, who is also the education minister, arrived in Dhaka today on the last leg of his tour of the South Asia and Pacific region. During his talks with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, the envoy said that there are prospects for recruiting more manpower from Bangladesh for the reconstruction and rehabilitation work which is going on in Kuwait. He also discussed the problems being faced by people who had to return from Kuwait, leaving behind their jobs during the Gulf War. The Kuwaiti envoy gave an assurance that his government will consider this issue. He is also a leading member of the five-member National Council of Kuwait.

Dhaka Spent 200 Crore Taka on Rohingya Refugees

BK1103142793 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 26 Feb 93 p 1

[All dates and figures as published]

[Text] Bangladesh Government, United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), NGOs [nongovernment organizations], and other organisations have spent Taka about 200 crore in cash and one lakh tons of different essential goods including rice, pulses, edible oil, salt, soap, and biscuits for Rohingya refugees in the last 16 months.

According to an official source, about three lakh Rohingya refugees entered Bangladesh territory on November, 1991. Bangladesh and Myanmar [Burma] Government signed an agreement on September '92 for the repatriation of the Rohingya refugees. Only 21,500 Rohingya refugees have been repatriated during the last six months.

The official source said if repatriation continues in such a slow pace it will take five years to complete repatriation of all the Rohingya refugees.

The official source said Bangladesh Government had spent Taka 7.10 crore at the initial stage before signing the agreement with UNHCR.

The Red Crescent Society donated 2,776 metric tons of rice, 664 metric tons of pulse, 272 metric tons of edible oil, 32 metric tons of salt, eight metric tons of soap, five metric tons of biscuits and 7,600 pieces of blankets.

United Nations High Commission for Refugees has signed an agreement to spend Taka 32 crore 45 lakh for the Rohingya refugees. Meanwhile, the UNHCR authority has handed over Taka 21 crore 74 lakhs. Besides, the UNHCR has donated 50 thousand pieces of blankets and 1,822 role of plastic sheets.

The World Food Programme (WFP) has donated 2,17,79,000 dollars in cash at three installments. Besides, the WFP has donated 54,134 metric tons of food items including rice, pulse, and edible oil in three phases.

The source further said 29 NGOs have already spent Taka 40 crore. Islamic Development Bank has taken up different projects worth about Taka 7.24 crore. Taka six crore has already been spent out of the total amount.

The source further said that the Government has issued 2,65,000 ration cards for the refugees. Each card holder is receiving 450 grams of rice, 60 grams of pulse and 20 grams of vegetable oil everyday.

The source also said about two thousand civil officers, staff, and employees, and BDR [Bangladesh Rifles], police, and ansar [paramilitary force] are working day and night to manage the Rohingya refugees.

It may be mentioned here that a good number of Rohingya refugees died of various diseases like diarrhoea and fever in different camps.

Besides, a good number of people were killed during the clashes between themselves and the security people.

India

Powerful Explosion at Bombay Stock Exchange

BK1203091293 Hong Kong AFP in English 0901 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Bombay, March 12 (AFP)—A powerful blast suspected to have been caused by a bomb rocked the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) Friday afternon, injuring dozens of people, police and witnesses said.

The BSE suspended trading immediately after the explosion as the injured were transported to hospitals in taxis and ambulances. More than a dozen fire engines raced to the area, enveloped by a pall of black smoke.

Police and fire brigade sources said they suspected the explosion was caused by a bomb planted in the basement of the skyscraper which houses the BSE on the crowded Dalal Street in Bombay, India's commercial capital.

The explosion brought down a wall in the basement which also serves as parking space for scores of automobiles.

A precise estimate of the casualties or the extent of injuries was not available. Casualty estimates ranged between 50 and 200 by police and eyewitness accounts. No suspects were mentioned. Most of the injured were investors and brokers.

The BSE is India's premier stock market, accounting for more than 70 percent of shares traded in the country's bourses. Stock prices have plummeted in recent days.

'International Conspiracy' Suspected

BK1203124493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] At least 62 persons were killed and 152 injured in a series of bomb blasts that took place in 12 places in Bombay city this afternoon. Making a statement in the Rajya Sabha, the home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, said that he suspects an international conspiracy in the incidents and said that the Center will request the Maharashtra chief minister to ensure that rumors are not spread by vested interests. He said he wil visit Bombay to personally assess the situation. He also assured the members that the Center will come out with a detailed statement before parliament on Monday [15 March].

Earlier, the minister of state for home, Mr. Rajesh Pilot, informed the Lok Sabha that 15 to 20 bodies have been recovered from the Stock Exchange building where the blast was reported to be most powerful. Syed Sibte Razi, who was in the chair said the whole house expressed its deep sympathy to the families of those killed in the blasts.

Our Bombay correspondent reports that the major blast occurred in the basement office of the Bank of Baroda in the 29-storey Bombay Stock exchange building. Eyewitnesses said they heard a loud bang followed by smoke billowing out of the building. The impact of the blast was so powerful that it damaged several other buildings in the vicinity. The police and fire brigade has been rushed to the scenes of the blasts and rescue operations are in full swing.

About 500 Injured; 84 Killed

BK1203144193 Delhi All India Radio Network in Tamil 1345 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Eighty-four people were killed and about 500 injured in a series of powerful bomb blasts at 12 places in Bombay this afternoon. Minister of State for Home Rajesh Pilot gave this information in the Lok Sabha a short while ago. He said these blasts took place at 13 crowded places, including the Stock Exchange building. These bombs were planted in cars and other vehicles parked at crowded places. Rajesh Pilot quoted Maharashtra Chief Minister Sharad Pawar as saying that the situation is now under control and an emergency team is busy in extending help to the affected people. He said a high-level central team comprising Research and Analysis Wing, RAW, National Security Guard, NSG, is rushing to Bombay city to assist the state government. The team also includes a group of bomb experts. Rajesh Pilot also said that Sharad Pawar requisitioned paramilitary forces to deal with the situation.

Our Bombay correspondent reports that several people were injured in the powerful bomb blast at the 29-story Bombay Stock Exchange building. The blast occurred at the basement of the building, which houses the Bank of Baroda office. Our correspondent, quoting eyewitnesses, says that there was a sudden explosion with a loud noise and thick smoke billowed out of the building immediately. Adjacent buildings were also damaged due to the impact of the blast. Agency reports say that the series of explosions from the southern to northern tip of the Bombay city that occurred within an hour rocked the entire Bombay city. The first blast occurred at the Bombay Stock Exchange building at 1340 [0810 GMT]. Similar explosions also occurred at other commercial establishments like Air India building, Manish Market, Century Bazaar, and the Centaur Hotel. There were also bomb explosions at Nair Hospital, J.J. Hospital, Bombay University, State Transport Bus Stand at Central Bombay, Yarn Market in South Bombay. Several people were injured in the stampede that took place when a large number of panic-stricken people ran helter skelter in the

Stock Exchange building immediately after the blast. These bomb blasts, which rocked the buildings at a distance of half a kilometer from Nariman Point, were extremely powerful. A large number of people from the offices located in the multistorey buildings around Nariman Point ran here and there. All the buildings became empty within a few seconds of the blasts. More than 30 motor vehicles were also shattered in the blasts.

Earlier, speaking at the Rajya Sabha, Home Minister S.B. Chavan, said he suspects conspiracy at the international level in this incident. He also said that the central government will request the Mahrashtra chief minister to be cautious against rumors spread by vested interests.

Rao Stresses Restoration of Country's Secular Credentials

BK1103131093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] The prime minister today declared that the government will come up with special measures to eliminate mixing religion with politics. Mr. Narasimha Rao said the first priority of his government is the restoration of secular credentials of the country. He pledged to bring forward any constitutional and legal amendment to ensure secular democracy. He was replying to the marathon debate in the Lok Sabha today on the motion of thanks to the president's address to parliament. The house later adopted the motion by a voice vote after rejecting all opposition amendments. Earlier, the National Front, left parties, and the AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] members walked out in protest against the government not reconsidering to refer the Ayodhya issue to the Supreme Court under Article 138. The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] members later staged a walkout as the prime minister did not give any assurance on holding election in the formerly BJP-ruled states within six months. The Muslim League members abstained from voting to lodge their protest against the acquisition of land at the disputed site at Ayodhya.

More on Rao Remarks

BK1103164293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] The prime minister today declared that his government will come up with special constitutional and legal provisions to eliminate bringing religion into politics. Mr. Narasimha Rao said the first priority and concern of his government is the restoration of secular credentials of the country. He pledged to bring forward necessary amendments to ensure secular democracy. The prime minister was replying to the marathon debate in both houses of parliament on the motion of thanks to the president's address. The two houses later adopted the motion by voice vote after rejecting all opposition amendments. In both houses, most of the opposition parties staged walkouts, not satisfied with the prime minister's reply to various points raised by their members.

Appealing to all to change the national agenda from religion to economic recovery and progress, the prime minister said the country cannot afford further tinkering with its secular fabric. The prime minister reiterated that both temple and mosque will be constructed at Ayodhya as promised by his government. He offered to consider referring the dispute to the Supreme Court under Article 138 even now if the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] is agreeable to abide by the court verdict. He added that the BJP must also assure that it will not resort to any agitation on this issue during the pendency of the case. Mr. Rao explained that any reference under Article 138 without the consent of all parties would lead to litigation and confrontation for many years. Under the circumstances, the prime minister said, the only option left to the government was to make a reference under Article 143. He declared that whatever the decision given by the court will be fully implemented.

Describing the big hike in the budget allocation for agriculture, rural development, and other social services as turning point in the government's new policies, he announced that there will be no import of wheat this year. He said if the good monsoon continues, there will not be any need to import next year also.

On the Dunkel proposal, the prime minister asserted that the interests of the farmers will not be allowed to be affected.

On the Mandal Commission's recommendations [to reserve jobs for weaker sections], he said the government will strictly implement the judgment of the Supreme Court on the issue. He assured the members that any anomaly brought to his notice will be corrected within the framework of the judgment.

The prime minister said that the economy which had strayed away because of the Ayodhya incident and the riots thereafter is picking up now and this has to be consolidated.

On Punjab, the prime minister said now that normalcy has come to the state, the government is initiating some efforts to tackle the outstanding problems in the state.

Replying to clarifications sought by some BJP members, the prime minister said that elections in the four states where the BJP governments were dismissed in December last year will be held according to the Constitution.

Five Militants, One Soldier Killed in Punjab

BK1103150293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] In Punjab, five militants and one CRPF jawan [Central Reserve Police Force soldier] were killed in separate encounters with the security forces since last night. Eight militants were arrested in Bhatinda and Ludhiana districts.

Krishna Rao To Replace Saxena as Kashmir Governor

BK1203012093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0035 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] General K.V. Krishna Rao has been appointed the new governor of Jammu and Kashmir. This will be the second time that Gen. Krishna Rao takes over as governor of the state. He succeeds Mr. G.C. Saxena, whose resignation has been accepted by the president. According to a Rashtrapati Bhavan [President's House] communique, Gen. Rao's appointment will be effective from the date he assumes office.

Parliament Debates Attack on Congress-I Lawmaker

BK1203093293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Both houses of parliament today witnessed heated exchanges between the Congress-I and the AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] members from Tamil Nadu on the attack on a Congress-I MLA [member of Legislative Assembly] in Madras. The matter was raised in the Lok Sabha by Mr. C.K. Kuppuswamy, Congress-I, who demanded that the home minister should look into the matter and make a statement in the house. He alleged that there were many such incidents earlier also due to the breakdown of law and order in the state. Refuting the charge, the leader of the AIADMK in the Lok Sabha, Mr. P.K. Narayanan, said that the state chief minister has already assured the assembly that strict action will be taken against the guilty and one of the accused has already been removed from his party. He also said that the assembly speaker and the chief minister have condemned the incident and have ordered investigations.

In the Rajya Sabha, the matter was raised by Mr. S.K.T. Ramachandran of the Congress-I supported by Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, Janata Party. Mr. G. Swaminathan of the AIADMK regretted the incident and said the state assembly is (?seized) with the matter. The home minister, Mr. Chavan, said the center would like to get the facts from the Tamil Nadu government.

President's Rule Enforced in Tripura State

BK1103163093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Tripura has been brought under president's rule. A presidential notification under Article 356 of the Constitution was issued in New Delhi this evening to this effect. Earlier, the union cabinet endorsed the state government's recommendations for imposing president's rule. The step has been necessitated following the request of the caretaker chief minister, Mr. Samir Ranjan Barman, to the governor to relieve him of his responsibilities. The term of the 60-member Tripura assembly ended on the 28th of last month. The state is scheduled to go for assembly polls early next month.

Rajya Sabha Demands Probe Into Reported Starvation

BK1103102493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Members in the Rajya Sabha today demanded that a delegation of the House should be sent to Hazaribagh, Kalahandi, and Balamau, and other such places in the country to assess the reported starvation conditions in these areas. Raising the matter during the zero hour, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, JD-S [Janata Dal-S], said that it is a matter of shame that there are reports of starvation deaths even after 45 years of independence. He mentioned a specific death by hunger of a person in a village in Hazaribagh District of Bihar. He said, he personally visited the village and found that people are facing very difficult conditions there.

Other members also raised this issue and demanded that a team of members of the House should be sent there to have an on-the-spot assessment of the situation and recommend to the government immediate steps to be taken in these areas.

Deployment of Trishul Missile Expected Early 1994

BK1203093593 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 4 Mar 93 p 9

[By Pravin Sawhney]

[Text] New Delhi—All three defence services versions of the indigenous low-level, quick reaction surface-to-air missile Trishul are ready to enter series production, with the Army likely to deploy the missile early next year, authoritative sources said.

The Army version will eventually replace the Russian OSAAK (SAM- 8), the Air Force version comes in place of the existing Pechoras (SAM-3) and the Naval version will be both in the anti-shipping and anti-aircraft modes, the latter to replace the Sea Cat missiles.

The single-stage, solid fuel motor missile with a 500 meters-9 km range will be provided with command guidance by the modified Fly-catcher radar for the three versions.

The radar, costing Rs [rupees] 6 crore each, is being manufactured under licence at Bharat Electronics Limited, and its earlier version, which does not have the continuous guidance facility, is in use with the outdated land-based air defence L/70 guns.

The Army version will be fully mobile on the tracked BMP-II armoured vehicles to be employed primarily in an anti-helicopter role in a fast moving mechanised battlefield.

Three missiles each will be mounted on the two banks of the BMP- II, with the compact Fly-catcher in between to provide continuous surveillance, tracking and fire control.

The missile will then be launched, gathered into the line of the tracking beam and guided all the way to the target.

The missiles are environmentally sealed, implying it has been safeguarded agains dust and nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

The Army Trishul missile system is expected to cost around Rs 11 crore. Each missile, with an import component of about 20 per cent, by value will cost over Rs 25 lakh, sources said.

The Fly-catcher radar is under stood to be far superior electronically to the ones provided on the existing OSA-AK missiles, with superior Electronic Counter Counter Measures (ECCM) capabilities required against powerful enemy electronic jammings.

Meant to detect objects at maximum range of 25 km and from 10 meters-to 1.5 km above the ground, the Fly-catcher radar get its very name because of its electronic sensitivity to detect even flies.

The Army version, first launched in September 1985, has had its 15 flights tested on high mobile wheeled vehicles similar to OSAAK (SAM-8) missiles. As limited SAM-8 entered the Army only 4 years ago, it is unlikely to be replaced soon by Trishul.

Trishul missiles are expected to be grouped into independent air defence units to support the mechanised battle. The Army training for induction of the missiles according to the delineated role is likely to commence this May, sources said. The Naval version has been provided with a radio altimeter in its sensor unit, which will enable the missile to skim about 7 meters above the sea-waves and intercept enemy missiles.

This version will be fired off the same mounting in the anti-shipping and anti-aircraft modes.

Trade Agreement Signed With Armenia

BK1103091093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] India and Armenia has signed a five-year trade agreement. It provides for trade in hard currency and cooperation in a wide range of economic activities.

Under the agreement signed in New Delhi today, the two countries will accord to each other the most favored nation treatment. Direct contacts will be encouraged between the business communities of the two countries.

Over One Lakh Sri Lankan Refugees Still in India

BK1103100093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Efforts are being made to persuade the remaining Sri Lankan refugees to return to their country. The Lok Sabha was informed today that over one lakh 18 thousand Sri Lankan refugees are still in India.

Giving this information, the minister of state for home, Mr. P.M. Sayeed, said that New Delhi has asked the Bangladesh and the Myanmar [Burma] Governments to accept the refugees from their countries.

Problems Created by Infiltration From Bangladesh Viewed

BK1203115893 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Commentary by Dr. Arun Kumar Bannerjee: "Infiltration From Bangladesh—Its Impact on States in East and Northeast India"]

[Text] The social and political stability of a number of Indian states in the east and northeast have been affected by continuous infiltration from Bangladesh and Myanmar [Burma]. Bangladesh is surrounded by Indian territory on three sides. Of the Indian states having common borders with Bangladesh, Tripura, Assam, and West Bengal are the worst affected by infiltration. Tripura has an 856-km-long border with Bangladesh. The Cachar and Karimganj Districts in Assam have a 125-km border and Mizoram shares a 315-km-long border with Bangladesh. While some of these borders have hilly terrain, the 1,112.5-km-long border with Bangladesh in South Bengal consists mostly of land frontiers although in some cases a river may also constitute the boundary as the Ichamati river in the South 24 Parganas in West Bengal. The nature of the terrain makes it difficult to check infiltration, if the border is in the hilly terrain or if constituted by a river such as the Ichamati which frequently changes its course.

Since most of the Indo-Bangladesh border is porous, it is relatively easy for the prospective infiltrators from Bangladesh to cross over to the Indian side of the border, in many cases with the connivance of the border police. Once they enter India, they become virtually indistinguishable from the local population. It is difficult to be precise about the number of infiltrators from Bangladesh who are not only living in the neighboring states but also in other areas, particularly in New Delhi. According to one estimate, the number is put at 15 million, though most people consider it to be on the high side. There can be no doubt, however, that a substantial number of Bangladeshis came to India during the 1972-90 period either as illegal immigrants or as migrants with valid documents and then overstayed. According to BSF [Border Security Force] sources, in West Bengal alone 600,000 Bangladeshi infiltrators are residing as permanent residents. Most of them came to India during the period between 1972 and 1990 with valid papers but decided to overstay.

Continuous infiltration from Bangladesh has brought significant demographic changes in the Indian border states which becomes evident from the census reports. The antiforeigners agitation in Assam during the 1980's was directed primarily against the migrants from Bangladesh. The prolonged agitation had virtually wrecked the economy of the state. Many of these immigrants came to Assam during the 1970's and even earlier, no doubt, with the encouragement of some local political leaders to work as agricultural laborers. In Tripura, tension between the local tribal population and the nontribals is, to some extent, the result of continuous migration from Bangladesh, which inflated the number of nontribals, threatening the modes of life of the local population.

A new addition to the problem during the 1980's was influx of Chaka refugees from Chittagong hill tracts who migrated to India to escape persecution in Bangladesh. Their very presence in Indian territory has become a bone of contention between India and Bangladesh. Although the Bangladesh Government agreed to take back the refugees, there was no agreement on the numbers involved. The condition of the Chittagong hill tract did not encourage the refugees to return to Bangladesh either. While the Indian Government has had to spend a substantial sum of money for maintaining these refugees, their presence in Tripura has further aggravated the law and order situation. Large-scale migration from Bangladesh has also affected the political and social stability of several districts in West Bengal, particularly the districts of Murshidabad, Nadia, and the South 24 Parganas and also of Calcutta.

Infiltration has led to a spurt in smuggling and the associated transborder crimes. The problem has been compounded in recent years by the influx of Biharis, the Urdu-speaking Muslims who were stranded in Bangladesh after the liberation war. The demographic composition of some areas of Calcutta has undergone changes over the last decade as a result of the illegal migration from Bangladesh. The problem of infiltration has assumed such a proportion that a meeting of chief ministers and other officials from 10 states and union territories was held in New Delhi in September 1992 to discuss measures for coordinating the policies of the union and state governments to stop illegal migration. Various measures have been suggested, including deportation, issue of identity cards for the people living in the border areas, fencing of border and stricter vigils on the border by intensifying patrols, and setting up of more observation posts. Some of these measures are also being implemented. These measures will not be sufficient to deal with the problem unless there is cooperation between the Bangladesh and Indian Governments. The flow of migration may also stop if there will be an improvement in the economic condition in Bangladesh and an end to political discrimination.

Iran

Tehran Severs Relations With Zambia

LD1203140193 Tehran IRNA in English 1337 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Tehran, March 12, IRNA—The Islamic Republic Embassy to Lusaka on Thursday [11 March] categorically refuted Zambian officials claim on Iran's support for Zambian United National Independence Party (UNIP) in its bid to topple the ruling regime.

The embassy in a statement released following a full cut in the Tehran-Lusaka relations by the Zambian Government said the decision had been taken as a result of foreign powers intervention and their offering of baseless and wrong information to the Zambian Government. "The decision," said the statement "is contrary to the Zambian people's interest."

It also announced Iran's retaliatory move in cutting ties with Zambia and said the Zambian accredited ambassador's mission to Tehran as well as all agreements with Lusaka were null and void.

Zambia accused Iran and Iraq of financially supporting the UNIP after it defused a coup plot by the party aimed at overthrowing the ruling regime. Iran had immediately rejected the charges.

According to diplomatic sources Zambia has adopted such a policy mainly for its being in dire need of foreign aid coming from the West and due to pressures exerted on the country by the U.S. and Israel.

Editorial Criticizes U.S. State Department

NC1103124293 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 8 Mar 93 p 2

[Editorial: "Terrorist or Freedom-Lover?"]

[Text] Some months after Israeli regime's propaganda on introducing the Islamic Republic of Iran as the arch enemy of the Zionists, the U.S. has also called Iran the most hazardous state which supports international terrorism.

In a written statement, the U.S. State Department has introduced Iran as the main backer of extremist Islamic and Palestinian groups. Though this written statement is said to have been issued in response to a written question posed by a reporter, it has been very rash and somewhat ludicrous.

In fact, if the statement were issued by a legal body which globally advocated human rights issues, it would not have been preposterous. But ironically the statement comes from a government which owes a large part of its current power to continued violations of human rights and which supports the dictatorial regimes and the governments that stage coup d'etats.

Without intending to set forth the name of any specific country, we ask: Which countries are the U.S. allies in the Middle East? Where is the popular basis of these governments? What kind of free elections are conducted in these countries allied to the U.S.?

The closest U.S. allies in region which receive the greatest backing of the White House even lack a Parliament let alone the fact that they would accept the people's sovereignty.

Iran's support for the Palestinians is among offenses enumerated in the U.S. State Department statement. Who is actually guilty of this charge? Iran or the U.S.? Iran—which defends the right of an oppressed person whose land has been occupied or which defends innocent women and children who are massacred by a barbaric and blood-thirsty regime just because of making protests—or the U.S.—which has mustered its political and military power to support and back a savage and aggressor regime which accepts none of the principles of international relations and none of the Security Council resolutions?

In fact, if support for Palestine and the oppressed Palestinians is terrorism, then we are proud of being such terrorists. And if support for the Zionists ruling over Tel Aviv and for the aggessor Israeli regime is love for freedom, then we bestow this love for freedom upon the White House. In the meantime, we call on the broad-minded people of the world to make judgment.

U.S. Seen To Launch 'New Propaganda Offensive'

NC1203103893 Tehran SALAM in Persian 8 Mar 93 p 12

[Unattributed commentary: "Diplomacy—Democrat-Style"]

[Text] One week after the New York blast, the U.S. police have not given a precise opinion on the identity of the bomber, but, by publicizing the arrest of a Muslim Jordanian youth, they have instead instigated public opinion in the United States against the Arabs and Muslims.

Under such psychological conditions and in view of this atmosphere of inflammatory propaganda, the U.S. State Department—on the pretext of answering a question by a correspondent—stated the Clinton administration's stance in the form of various accusations, such as one on Iran's support for terrorism. This statement, as well as blaming Iran for assassinations in various places, lists Iran's support for the Palestinian combatants and its opposition to the Arab-Israeli peace talks among the terrorist acts.

The U.S. vice president and congressmen also raised the tattered topic of restrictions on the Baha'i sect and attempted fresh attacks under the label of the violation of human rights in Iran. In view of U.S. influence on the United Nations and its European headquarters, you cannot separate recent acts by the European Headquarters of the Human Rights Commission on the violation of human rights in Iran from the political overtures of the Clinton administration.

All these efforts, or this psychological war, should be considered as the Clinton administration's first attempt at testing new U.S. policy. The new U.S. Administration maintains the limitations and considerations of the previous Administration in its approach to Iran. But we expected the Democrats, who were wounded by the Islamic revolution of Iran, to adopt more sensationalist propaganda on human rights and terrorism.

There are other reasons why Iran is granted priority in U.S. propaganda. Among these is that the communist scarecrow no longer exists and that a new enemy should be created for the U.S. and the world. Today, the U.S. military presence in various places, especially in the Persian Gulf, is being questioned. It cannot easily be justified by magnifying the military threat of the communist bloc as in the past.

But at least Iran can be blamed in a hackneyed way for part of America's problems in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. Perhaps this is a Third World epidemic that has spread to the West. When this hackneyed stance cannot solve a riddle facing the police inside the United States, they immediately blame a fundamentalist foreign enemy for all their ills. Such approaches are not very attractive, because of their baselessness and weak foundations.

Clinton and the U.S. Democrats cannot base their policy on Iran on commotion and sensationalism nor can they forget its vulnerability in areas where Iran can be influential. Our officials should consider—and so should we—that this new onslaught by the enemy indicates the reality that each move that might be considered as a sign of flexibility will make the enemy more determined to pursue its illegitimate objectives.

The policies that have been started on international forums and on accusations of human rights violations and terrorism call for a serious and fundamental review. The permission to the UN Human Rights Commission representative to visit Iran and other political moves and stances should never imply that Iran is flexible. If they do, the enemies will advance. We face a new propaganda offensive. We should fight by emphasizing our revolutionary Islamic stances.

Naseri's Reaction to Human Rights Commission Vote

LD1103194893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] On the eve of the international Jerusalem Day [last Friday of the month of Ramadan, this year on 19 March], under American pressure, once again the United Nations' Human Rights Commission in a hostile and one-sided stance has accused the Islamic Republic of Iran of violation of human rights.

This resolution was approved under conditions when the permanent representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the European Office of the United Nations, by presenting clear proof and evidence of the direct and indirect participation of Western countries in the violation and disregard of the rights to life and other basic rights of human beings, especially in the course of the imposed war, had already demanded that those countries should provide answers and should admit to their responsibility for their anti-human actions.

Following the approval of that resolution, Sirus Naseri, the permanent ambassador and representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Geneva, in an interview with the Voice and Vision [Radio and Television] of the Islamic Republic of Iran pointed out: Unfortunately, due to the strength and influence of Western countries in [international] organizations and their intimidation of the Third World countries and the Eastern Bloc, the Westerners pass whatever they wish in the form of resolutions in those organizations. However, what is important to us is that the Western countries which lay claim to human rights are not prepared to take part in a logical and documented debate concerning the accusations they level against the Islamic Republic of Iran, and they provide no answers to the arguments that we have raised against them. Instead of answering our claims they complain purely because we have mentioned their name in the Human Rights Commission and have divulged their offenses.

The ambassador of our country in the European office of the United Nations, referring to the fact that the major complaints of the resolutions passed concerning human rights in Iran refer to the large number of those who have been executed, stressed: The countries which formulate those resolutions know very well that the majority of those who are sentenced to death in Iran are narcotics smugglers. After having been engaged in a long war we are now forced to deal seriously with the issue of narcotics as a crisis which is threatening our country.

I should add that, despite all the pressures and plots of Western countries, the resolution of the Human Rights Commission regarding Iran was passed yesterday with the weak majority of 21 votes out of 53 members of the Commission and with 11 votes against, and 14 abstensions or absent votes.

ICO Criticized on 'Weak Performance' on Bosnia

NC1103124093 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 6 Mar 93 p 2

[Editorial: "What Has Become of ICO Power?"]

[Text] The massacre of the Muslims goes on in the town of Cerska in Eastern Bosnia-Hercegovina. According to eyewitness reports, the Serbs have burnt down nine villages in the regions around Cerska, and have slaughtered more than 500 women and children.

After the recent atrocities perpetrated by the Serbs, the government in Bosnia-Hercegovina has requested for an emergency meeting of the Security Council. And the question which immediately springs to mind is whether after so many crimes committed by the Serbs, and after so many futile Security Council resolutions, is there still any ground for the hope that something may be achieved through the Security Council?

One cannot really have any objections to the decision by the Bosnia government. Their problems derive mainly from two sources. They had been counting too much on assistance from the international organizations, and expected the Western countries to act the way they had done in the Persian Gulf after the Security Council adopted a firm position against the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq.

But by now it should have become clear that within the framework of the Western culture, an act of aggression is to be evaluated by the degree of its relevance to the interests of the Western countries. That is why after the occupation of Kuwait and the impending oil crisis, hundreds of thousands of troops suddenly found their way in the region.

The more deplorable aspect of the situation is the weak performance of the regional organizations such as ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] which could have prevented a great many of the crimes perpetrated by the Serbs, through adoption of much more decisive stances. ICO could have prevented a great portion of the crimes being perpetrated in Bosnia today, through timely consultations with some of the European countries like Germany, Austria, and Hungary which have adopted a fair stance in regards to the events in Bosnia.

On the other hand, much of Clinton's promises of the election campaign period have lost their force in the process of action, and have dwindled to a number of flights and airdrops of foodstuff and medical supplies, and what is more, it is not clear whether the supplies are being received by the Muslims or are falling into the hands of the Serbs.

Furthermore, the proposal of cooperation from the Russians will mean that the whole operation has to be called off in view of the fact that the Russians have adopted a totally unfair stance regarding the events in the Balkan.

But such a project could easily have been carried out by the ICO countries. The project of providing food and medical supplies through airdrops to the beleaguered people of Bosnia could be undertaken by Iran and Pakistan as representative countries from the Islamic world, and the whole project could of course be supervised by the UN. Iran has already had successful experience in this field by providing aids through airdrops in Afghanistan.

There is no time to be lost. The women and children in Bosnia are looking forward to people who really mean to provide help, and are not just hunting for propaganda opportunities.

Reaction to Deaths in Egyptian Mosques Decried

LD1103134193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1048 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] In the name of God. Good day, dear listeners. The tragedy of the killings at the Aswan mosque in Egypt and state-terrorism is the title of our political commentary for today, to which I draw your attention.

The new wave of savage military attacks by the Egyptian Government's security forces against that country's mosques at the capital and other cities in the past few days has resulted in the killing of dozens of worshipers. [passage omitted]

In view of the blessed month of Ramadan, people gather in mosques to offer their prayers and perform their religious rites. But the Egyptian regime is deploying aggressive, violent, terrorist, and terrorizing methods and creating bloody incidents around the mosques to frighten people from gathering at Islamic mosques and centers. In the course of the past days, over 50 worshipers and several policemen were victimized by this inhuman and horrific policy of the Egyptian Government in Egypt's mosques.

What is regrettable is the silence of defenders of human rights and democracy and those who claim that terrorism should be confronted, and who, in spite of these claims, have laid the foundations for international terrorism. It is truly regrettable that Islam, as a religion with over 1 billion followers in the world, is at the mercy of planned and organized terrorist policies of the state in Egypt, where 95 percent of the population is Muslim. No voice of protest is raised against these kinds of shocking crimes and those who commit them. Although the Egyptian Government tries in its propaganda to portray religious Muslim Egyptians and worshipers in mosques as terrorists and rebellious people, nevertheless, all the evidence indicates that the problem of the rulers of Egypt is not the existence of so called Islamic terrorism or Islamic fundamentalism or Islamic extremism. The problem facing the Egyptian Government is Islam. When the mufti of the al-Azhar mosque criticizes Egypt's television programs for being indecent and against public morality during the blessed month of Ramadan and forbids Muslims from watching them, the president of Egypt or the interior minister cannot very well call the state-appointed mufti of that country a fundamentalist or terrorist. Yet, in spite of this, the interior minister of Egypt did not refrain from reacting strongly to the fatwa of the religious muftis of that country.

What is interesting is the simultaneous escalation of repressive measures and attacks against Islamic mosques and centers in Egypt, Algeria, Israel, and Iraq, which seems to be connected to the anti-Islamic atmosphere that America and Israel have created at an international level and are inciting. It is said that, essentially, this negative propaganda climate against Islam and Muslims, and the pretext for it as well, has been deliberately created with this same said aim. [sentence as heard]

In the opinion of regional political experts, Egyptian Muslims have refrained so far from responding to the current criminal and inhuman war against Islam during the blessed month of Ramadan; and they are endeavoring not to enter into the trappings of a civil war that the rulers of Egypt are seeking to bring about and through which they intend to weaken Islam. But this itself has placed Egypt's Muslims among the ranks of the victims of state-terrorism, after the Palestinians. Unfortunately, big powers, especially America and the United Nations, officially support this kind of terrorism in Egypt, Israel, and Algeria and, by maintaining their silence, they give their approval to its continuation in Bosnia-Hercegovina.

Need To Balance Political, Trade Ties With West Seen

NC1203104893 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 8 Mar 93 p 18

[M. Shahidi commentary: "Need To Balance Political, Economic Relations"]

[Text] The worsening situation in Bosnia-Hercegovina after the fall of Cerska to the Serbs was followed by Iranian diplomatic activities, such as the summoning of the ambassadors of Islamic countries and of Security Council members to the Foreign Ministry and a letter from the foreign minister to the UN secretary general. These steps can be praised within the framework of the responsibility felt by Iran over the fate of the Muslim nation of Bosnia-Hercegovina. How effective such steps are in preventing calamities in Bosnia is doubtful.

The one-year record of incidents in Bosnia speaks of a coordinated plot by the world community to cleanse the Balkans of Muslims and prevent the formation of an independent Muslim government in the heart of Europe. The players in this plot are those countries that have extremely good economic relations, and at the same time weak political relations, with us. Instead of economic relations and the volume of trade being a means to make these countries reconsider their political approach to us, there are always doubts in a decisive approach against them; at least, we have been unable to balance commercial relations with political stances. This is the same problem that emerged with Britain's support of the apostate Salman Rushdie and the decision to decrease trade with it. How can we have hopes of the effectiveness of such summons and statements? It is no secret that the incidents in Bosnia clearly show the depth of the West's hatred of Islam. There can be no doubt that the West, in its general sense, brandishes its sword in the war against Islam and the Muslims. The war is not solely over a piece of land or geopolitical position. It is a war of values between the two camps of Islam and hegemonistic Western arrogance. The West knows of the capability of "militant Islam to confront the bullies" today with all its might and to strive to revive the grandeur of Islamic civilization and Muslims' pride.

When we are caught up in serious diplomatic considerations and our economy relies on the West, when most of our foreign trade relations are with these countries and we do not intend to harm our relations with countries that have brandished their sword against us and other Muslims, how can we expect to deal with this situation? When the leader of the revolution has, in recent months, stated clear and decisive stances on foreign policy, it is the duty of the executive bodies, specifically the Foreign Ministry, to find ways to fulfill this objective.

During his meeting with commanders and personnel of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, the esteemed revolution leader said: "... We do not need their help. They need our help. They need this oil. They feel the need for friendship with a strong government in this region. Of course this is a world of give and take. They take something and give something. But in this exchange, the pride, honor, and respect of this nation should be preserved..."

It seems that one of our basic problems is the absence of the expected initiative and creativity by our Foreign Ministry experts. The reality is that confronting rapid and complicated world developments calls for being fully aware of the weak and strong points of countries that lie in ambush for us, use their best brains to engineer plots against us, play a different tune for us each day, and try to tighten the siege. Under such conditions, our Foreign Ministry should be strong enough to analyze and clarify world conditions and to pinpoint the enemy's weaknesses. Naturally, we cannot—and should not—expect the revolution leader to emphasize all the details of steps that should be taken. If we do, the question that arises is: Where is the country's great policymaking and diplomatic machinery and who is responsible for it?

The officials running the country should show initiative and creativity. This is also required in foreign policy.

Media Criticized Over Montazeri 'Interview'

NC1203094093 Tehran SALAM in Persian 8 Mar 93 p 2

[Text] Following recent incidents in Qom, an IRNA correspondent interviewed Engineer Ahmad Montazeri, son of Ayatollah Montazeri. Part of the interview was disseminated as a news item to the foreign press. In Iran, only KEYHAN HAVA'I and KAYHAN in English cited the report—with some differences.

After the news was published in KEYHAN HAVA'I issue number 1022, Engineer Ahmad Montazeri replied to the paper, to IRNA, and to newspapers that have a wide circulation. His response did not appear in the next issue of KEYHAN HAVA'I. The story that appeared in the paper and the response run as follows:

[Within the article, SALAM publishes the boxed "text" of the report from KEYHAN HAVA'I, datelined Tehran, KEYHAN HAVA'I, 2 Esfand, 21 February, which reads as follows: "'Montazeri: News of my arrest has been published by the Westerners and enemies of the revolution':

["Ayatollah Montazeri has refuted reports of his arrest published by Western and counterrevolutionary mass media.

["In a brief interview with IRNA, he described the news disseminated by the West as a fabrication and said: 'The news of my arrest was disseminated by the Western press and enemies. I have nothing to do with this.'

["Saying that he still supports the Islamic revolution and the system's officials, Montazeri added: 'I remain a defender of the (Islamic) [parentheses as published] revolution and I have never turned my back on it.'

["Montazeri's son Ahmad Montazeri contacted the IRNA correspondent in Qom over the recent rumors of his father's arrest and said: 'Personally, my father does not want to interfere in political affairs and spends much of his time teaching, researching, and translating jurisprudential texts from Arabic into Persian.'"] [newspaper boxed passage ends]

[SALAM then publishes what it claims is the "text" of Ahmad Montazeri's response. It reads:]

Esteemed KEYHAN HAVA'I: Greetings. On page four of your issue number 1022 dated 12 Esfand 1371 [date as published], you carried a report: "Montazeri: News of my arrest has been published by the Westerners and enemies of the revolution." This contradicted the truth.

First, the IRNA correspondent did not interview His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Montazeri. He interviewed me, Ahmad Montazeri, his son. Second, not one sentence of the interview was correct. I ask that under the Press Law, this denial be published in your next issue, on the same page, and in the same column.

I regret that an interview by the country's official news agency is not published in any domestic newspaper, but gets distorted by a newspaper the readers of which are Farsi speakers living abroad. O that our press would publish the truth and let the brave and intelligent people of Iran judge for themselves.

The text of the interview is attached so that by publishing it, you will prove your fair judgment and, at least, your impartiality. [Signed] Ahmad Montazeri [Date] 13 Esfand 1371 [4 March 1993]

SALAM: If we have not published the speech by Ayatollah Montazeri or reported the events that followed, we accept that this is a significant weakness in the country's news-dissemination system, a weakness that is not limited to this case. We gradually strive to remove this weakness from SALAM and other newspapers.

Japan Donates Aid for Flood Victims

LD1003183393 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Text] At a meeting with the director general of the Far East and Oceania Department of the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs today, the Japanese ambassador to Tehran offered a $400,000 check for the relief of flood victims, and expressed his sorrow at the recent floods in southern Iran.

Last week a plane landed in Tehran bringing relief supplies to the value of around 30 million yen donated by the Japanese Government.

Tajik Refugees Request Temporary Asylum

LD1003184793 Tehran IRNA in English 1644 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Text] Herat, March 10, IRNA—About 110 Tajik refugees who fled to this western Afghan city to escape the massacre in their country, have requested the Islamic Republic for temporary asylum.

Interviewed by IRNA here today, the refugees who trekked 1,000 kms of the arduous snow-bound Mazar-e Sharif-Herat route in order to reach Iran, said that some of their companions lost their lives because of freezing climatic conditions and problems faced during their journey.

The group of Tajiks who are without any passports, hailed the Islamic Republic as one of their best friends sharing with them the same language—Persian. They said that if Iran was not ready to grant them asylum, it could at least permit them to go to other countries via its soil.

According to the refugees several countries including Turkey and Saudi Arabia have expressed readiness to receive them, but they prefer Iran for they were very much interested in the country and its Islamic culture.

They said that in Iran they could earn a living for and provide security for their families, whereas in Afghanistan there were no job opportunities and facilities in view of the prevailing problems.

Nearly 130,000 Tajik Muslims have crossed the border into Afghanistan following massacre of Muslims by communists in the former Soviet republic.

Non-Oil Exports Earn Government $2.6 Billion

LD1003191093 Tehran IRNA in English 1742 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Text] Tehran, March 10, IRNA—Non oil exports over the past 11 months of the current calendar year (to March 21) brought the country dlrs 2.6 billion, a 15 percent rise compared to the corresponding period last year.

According to the Customs Office here today the exports totalled 3,275 tons and showed an increase of 35 percent.

It said the items exported to some 100 world countries included woolen and silken hand-woven carpets, pistachios, animal skins and pickled hides, copper and aluminum dishes, cathode and anode plates, garments, construction stones, raisins and a variety of tricots.

Germany, Turkey and Dubai in that order topped Iran's export list.

Nepal

Communist Factions Demonstrate Against Government

BK1203112993 Hong Kong AFP in English 1123 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Kathmandu, March 12 (AFP)—Over 5,000 members of Nepal's four communist factions demanded the resignation of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala in an anti-government demonstration Friday, witnesses said.

The demonstration was organized by the Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist and Leninist) (NCP-UML), the Nepal Peasants and Workers Party (NPWP), the United People's Front (UPF) and the NCP (Mashal Flaming-torch).

Demonstrators' slogans covered the spectrum of opposition grievances against the government, from denouncing the decision to allow India to build part of the Tanakpur dam in Nepal, to calling for an inquiry into police opening fire on an anti-government demonstration in Sindhuli on March 5 during which a 15-year-old girl was killed, and protesting against lengthy power cuts imposed on alternate days despite a recent 92 per cent rise in electricity prices.

The demonstration was led by NCP(UML) parliamentary leader Madhav Kumar Nepal, parliamentarian Bharat Mohan Adhikari and leaders of the UPF and NCP (mashal), witnesses said.

The main objective of the demonstration was to gain support for the communists' planned burning torch demonstration on Saturday evening and general strike call on Sunday in Kathmandu valley where 850,000 people live, an NCP(UML) source said.

Riot police followed the demonstrators but there was no trouble.

Thirteen-hour long power cuts, which started early this week have affected industry, caused inconvenience and led to a sharp crime increase at night, the NCP source said.

Pakistan

Sharif, Afghans Return to Lahore After Saudi Visit

BK1203081893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] The prime minister arrived in Lahore from Saudi Arabia this morning. Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, who was accompanied by Afghan leaders, was received at the airport by the Punjab governor, Mian Mohammad Azhar; the federal [law] minister, Chaudhary Abdul Ghafoor; provincial ministers; AJK [Azad Jammu and Kashmir] ministers; and other senior officials.

Foreign Secretary Notes Importance of Afghan Accord

BK1103160293 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Khan has said the Afghan peace accord is a great success to Pakistan and it will establish peace in Afghanistan. Speaking to newsmen in Karachi this afternoon, he said it is a historic accord as all rival groups were present at the talks. He said it was not an easy task to prepare the conference table for all the Afghan leaders.

On Kashmir, he said Pakistan will continue its peaceful efforts to resolve the issue. He expressed the hope that this dispute will be settled according to UN resolutions.

On the recent conference of the Economic Cooperation Organization at Quetta, the foreign secretary said it would strengthen close ties among all the 10-member countries of the organization.

Paper Urges Halt to Fighting in Kabul Following Accord

BK1103125193 Islamabad THE NATION in English 11 Mar 93 p 6

[Editorial: "Shattered Peace"]

[Text] Just as the war-weary citizens of Kabul had heaved a sigh of relief over the signing of a peace accord by ten Mojahedin groups in Islamabad, whose signatories have yet to return from their thanksgiving prayers in Saudi Arabia, the peace in Kabul has been shattered by a horrifying missile and mortar attack. Some 27 people have died and another 150 wounded. And significantly the attackers are not any of the Mojahedin factions that remained outside the latest peace agreement they belong to the two major signatories, Prime Minister-designate Golbodin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami and the nine-group Shi'ite alliance, Hezb-e Wahdat. Clearly, working in a spirit of reconciliation to rebuild their ravaged country still is the last of the priorities of certain Mojahedin factions. The field commanders have not taken the message for peace seriously and, like before they are busy fighing their adversaries in and around Kabul for the achievement of military gains at the expense of innocent lives. The question is. Why this open defiance of their leaders by lower level fighters. Were no instructions left to them to stop bloodshed if a peace accord was signed? Or, if such instructions were left, the field commanders were supposed to keep the heat on till their seniors returned? [sentence as published] The chances are that either no instructions were left or the guns were not expected to fall silent till the warlords said so. It would be a cruel joke on the people of Afghanistan, if such was the case. Playing with the lives of innocent civilians for the sake of their egos or stupid war games, or whatever, shows how little concern these groups have for the well-being of their fellow Afghans. And if this is any indication of the shape of things to come, one cannot but be very pessimistic about peace in Afghanistan.

Though the observers of the Afghan scene have been expressing skepticism about the durable success of the Islamabad Peace Accord, but perhaps no one expected it to be broken so soon, even before the proverbial ink had dried on the Accord. In utter disregard of the peace agreement, Mojahedin fighters have continued to subject innocent civlians to senseless bloodshed and misery. As many as a hundred and seventy-five casualties in the wake of a supposedly well worked out truce and all the pious-sounding assertions of peace of the Afghan leaders is an unforgivable crime that must not be overlooked by the Peace Accord signatories. It is their responsibility to hold their respective field commanders accountable for bringing about death and suffering on the citizens of Kabul and hand them exemplary punishments. Just saying 'sorry' will not help. For it is not only a question of papering over the old enmities and rivalries but teaching the obdurate fighters a lesson in civility and respect for the life and well-being of their fellow Afghans. That should also be helpful in overcoming other anticipated difficulties in the actual implementation of the Islamabad Peace Accord.

Envoy to U.S. on Ties, Terrorism Label

BK1203125593 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 12 Mar 93 p 12

[Text] Islamabad, March 11: The Clinton administration despite differences between Islamabad and Washington about the status of freedom fighters in Occupied Kashmir, has ultimately given up the idea to enlist Pakistan as a terrorist state.

This was stated by Begum Sayeda Abida Hussain, Pakistan's ambassador to the United States, while talking to The Muslim here on Thursday.

She had come to Islamabad for consultations and met President Ghulam Ishaq Khan twice and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif once during the last week. She is leaving for Washington on Sunday. [14 March]

To a question, she said Washington had been alleging that Kashmiris fighting the Indian troops in the held valley were terrorists and Pakistan had been providing training and material assistance to them, whereas Islamabad refuted all these allegations. She said Pakistan had made it absolutely clear to Washington that Pakistan would not give up its support for the freedom fighters engaged in the Occupied Kashmir, since Pakistan was bound morally, historically and as per its international commitments to do so and Pakistan's support for the Kashmiri freedom fighters was purely diplomatic, political and of moral nature.

Abida Hussain said former US administration did ask Pakistan that Washington would keep an eye on the activities of Pakistan with reference to the struggle of Kashmiri freedom fighters. The US also asked Islamabad that Pakistan should not create a cause of complaint in this regard in coming few months. "Now the issue is over as Pakistan was not put on the list of the countries helping terrorists", Abida commented.

To another query, Pakistan's envoy said the possibility of release of F-16 planes within this year could not be ruled out since Pakistan had been regularly paying the instalments of the cost of these planes in advance. These planes were the property of Pakistan and the delivery schedule of these planes was to be terminated within next 12 months, she said. She said that "we have very genuine reasons to believe that the delivery of these planes would be made within the schedule." She did not elaborate.

Answering another query Abida said that fundamentalism was no more an issue between Pakistan and the United States. Pakistan was a democratic and civilised state, which had been honoring all internationally established norms of decency, she added.

Replying to a question about the American position regarding the nuclear programme of Pakistan, she said that no progress had been made yet on the question. Both the countries were in touch on issues of common interest, she said.

When asked about her meetings with the President and the Prime Minister, she said the meetings were good. When asked to make comparison between the meetings with the two, Abida, who was federal information and broadcasting minister in the caretaker arrangements in 1990, smilingly said the meetings with both "sahibs" were excellent and restricted to "diplomatic" matters.

Talking about future high level contact between Pakistan and the United States, Abida said Dr Henry Kissinger, former American Secretary of State would shortly visit Pakistan on the invitation of Government of Pakistan. Delegations of congressmen and the senators from the United States would also visit Pakistan in April. These visits would be of significant importance, she added.

To a query, the ambassador said Stephen Solarz, a prominent lobbyist for the Indian cause, would be visiting Pakistan as part of his activities related to his capacity as Director of a Hong Kong-based investment bank. Stephen Solarz, who had planned to visit India in the same capacity, had got nothing to do with political things, she made it clear.

Abida Hussain replying to another query said that US-based international human rights organisation was upset about the persecution campaign here against the world renown social worker Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan.

She said Pakistan had assured all the organisations concerned that nothing was being done against Dr Akhtar. "The Government of Pakistan holds Dr Khan in great esteem," she said. We have given the same assurance to the organisations of human rights.

Abida Hussain said Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan rendered great services in Komila (Bangladesh) and now he had done an excellent job in Orangi. He had offered meritorious services in the field of rural welfare, sanitation, population planning an fields of human well- being.

The Aga Khan Rural Programme, which had been launched some years ago in Pakistan was the result of inspiration from Dr Khan's work, she said.

The people, who were involved in character assassination of such a figure of international stature should refrain from doing so in the interest of the nation, she said.

Foreign Office Views Kashmir Policy, Kozyrev Visit

BK1103130193 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 11 Mar 93 pp 1, 10

[Text] Islamabad, March 10—Pakistan's stand on Kashmir would not be affected by the Azad Kashmir High Court's verdict that the Northern Areas, presently under the direct control of Pakistan, are part of Azad Kashmir, a Foreign Office spokesman stated here today.

Answering a question on the verdict at his weekly Press briefing he said that the matter requires to be studied carefully since the judgement is spread on a 105 page document and involves a number of ministries in addition to the Foreign Office.

He explained that Pakistan's position on Kashmir as stated in UN Security Council resolutions remained unchanged.

He informed the correspondents that Pakistan had accepted the invitation of the government of Kazakhstan for participation in a meeting of Asian states for confidence building measures, to be held in Alm-Ata on the 29th and 30th of March.

Pakistan is looking forward to playing a constructive role in the meeting which will be held at the level of experts. It will be attended by 20 Asian countries including the major powers of the continent.

He further informed the correspondents that the visit of the Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, which was due to take place from March 9 to 11 has been postponed due to some important domestic developments in Moscow. It was to be rescheduled in the later part of the month on the Russian request but due to the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharifs forthcoming visit to Germany new dates are being discussed.

He said that the Prime Minister would visit Germany from March 25 to 26.

Indian Kashmiris Urged To Reject Election Offer

BK1103150793 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 5 Mar 93 p 3

[Editorial: "Occupied Kashmir—India's New Designs"]

[Text] The Indian parliament on 1 March approved the extension of presidential rule in occupied Kashmir for another six months. Earlier, it gave approval to similar extensions five times, while presidential rule is in force in the occupied Kashmir for two and half years. According to the Indian Constitution, presidential rule cannot be implemented in a state continuously for more than three years. The current extension will be valid up to 2 September this year. After this, there will be two options for the Indian Government—to amend the Constitution in order to extend the maximum time limit of three years of presidential rule or to hold elections. The Indian Government is therefore facing a difficult situation and a dilemma. The Rao government, though a minority government which is functioning with the support of some parties, may succeed in securing the support of other parties in getting the Constitution amended on the pretext of the difficult situation in Kashmir. But, by doing so, it will clearly expose its own failure in Kashmir and the world will come to know precisely that the people of Kashmir are not with India and the Indian Government does not have the courage to hold elections in Kashmir.

Only two to three percent of people in occupied Kashmir voted during all of the earlier general elections held under Indian supervision. In fact, it was a boycott of the elections by the Kashmiris. Therefore, if the Indian Government amends the Constitution and extends presidential rule for a further period in occupied Kashmir, then it will be fully exposed to the world community. The second option is to hold elections which it has been deferring for the last two and half years on the pretext of the law and order situation.

The Rao government has recently been hinting that it is ready to hold "political consultations" with the freedom fighters, whom it had been calling separatists and terrorists, and is still doing so. Rajesh Pilot, Indian minister of state for home, said on 1 March that the government is ready to let the "extremists" form a ministry and assume power if they contest the election and win it. Home Minister Chavan also said in parliament that the government will adopt a sympathetic attitude if the "extremists" demand greater internal autonomy and decide to take part in the election while remaining within the precincts of the Indian Constitution. The Indian Government's record of holding elections in the state is so tainted that impartial observers have categorically stated that none of the elections held in Kashmir after independence has been free from irregularities. The Indian Government's current offer thus lacks any weight or attraction. There is no guarantee that it will not try to influence the proposed election by unfair means. The Rao government has also set the condition that the freedom fighters remain within the limits of the Indian Constitution. Now, if the freedom fighters during their election campaign raise a slogan that they want their right of self-determination, which had been promised by India and the United Nations, then the Indian Government will term the slogan a violation of the Constitution and will try to obstruct the group from raising such a slogan. It will rather definitely do so.

The invitation to take part in elections may be a trap or bait which is aimed at prompting all workers of the freedom movement to come to the surface. It will then be easy for the Indian Government to arrest them. Another possible intention might be that since there are so many organizations involved in the freedom struggle, and they have minor differences in perceptions and priorities, it will be easy for the Indian Government to fan their differences once all of them enter the election arena. Some of these groups might be duped by assuring them of government patronage and attempts might be made to drag them closer to the government. Another intention of the Indian Government by allowing the freedom fighters to take part in the election may be to debar the freedom fighters from gaining a majority by resorting to various tactics and to show the world that the freedom fighters lack majority support and claim that the disturbance which has continued for the last three years in occupied Kashmir is the result of Pakistan's support for the freedom fighters. The trickery displayed by the Indian Government by making this offer may also be aimed at diverting the freedom fighters from the armed struggle and to get them involved in the politics of election. The Indian Government hopes that it might dampen or eliminate the freedom struggle.

Given the situation, the freedom fighters should express their response to the Indian Government's latest offer only after very careful scrutiny. A spokesman for the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front has rightly said that they will not agree on anything less than freedom from India and that they reject the invitation to participate in the elections. We understand that other freedom movement organizations should also refuse to be trapped into this new enticement and force the Indian Government to accept their demand of self-determination or to amend the Constitution and thereby further expose its own unpopularity. The aforementioned proposal by the Indian Government conforms to the saying that "the old hunter brings in a new trap" and the fitting response to it is to reject it with contempt.

India Criticized Over Nuclear Issue

BK1103053293 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Commentary by Mohammad Yamin]

[Text] Pakistan has renewed its appeal to India to join the proposed five-nation conference of main and regional powers to seriously consider ways and means of effecting nuclear nonproliferation in South Asia. The appeal was made by Pakistan's secretary general for foreign affairs, Mr. Akram Zaki, while addressing the United Nations General Assembly's Political and Security Committee the other day. The proposal initiated by Pakistan's prime minister last year envisages a conference on nuclear nonproliferation in South Asia. It could be attended by the United States, Russia, China, India, and Pakistan and would evolve a regional approach for the introduction of a nuclear nonproliferation regime, which could be a major contribution toward global nonproliferation which is the ultimate idea and the most desirable objective.

Pakistan, as the initiator of the move, has reiterated time and again its earnest desire to enter into the proposed negotiations as early as possible. The United States, Russia, and China have also repeatedly expressed their willingness to join the conference. Most of the world states have welcomed the proposal as a positive step in the direction of nuclear nonproliferation and have wished it success.

It is, however, a matter of great pity that India has assumed a totally negative and noncooperative stance over the issue in utter disregard of the world opinion and what appears to be an antipeace attitude. It has consistently refused to participate in the proposed five-nation conference on one pretext or the order, its often-used ploy being the plea that the issue of nuclear nonproliferation ought to be treated on a global and not on regional basis. India would not like to get involved in the regional approach, knowing very well that global nonproliferation is something much more difficult to achieve than region-by-region nonproliferation. It is indeed strange logic put forward in a blatant manner.

Some leading world powers, unable to persuade, influence, or pressurize India to act in reasonable manner, have been suggesting that Pakistan should sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty unilaterally. Perhaps, they see in it an achievement of partial success which, according to their [word indistinct], is better than no success at all. In so doing, however, they seem to ignore the apprehensions of the smaller powers in the region. These apprehensions, it may be stressed, are further strengthened in the light of India's consistent refusal to consider any one of the numerous proposals for nuclear nonproliferation in South Asia raised on a number of occasions. These, it may be recalled, include international safeguards, such as inspections by international agencies, freezing or wrapping up of the weapon-grade nuclear program by all South Asian states, particularly India and Pakistan, simultaneously; declaration of South Asia as a nuclear-free zone of peace. Independent official reports from the United States and Russia indicate only too clearly that India's nuclear-weapon program is by far the most advanced in the region. It is receiving a further tremendous boost by the acquisition of advanced technology in this field and its hectic efforts to make rapid strides in the field of weaponry and its increasing capacity to produce indigenous missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads. What is all this? Does it not betray India's ambitions of dominating areas much beyond the range of its legitimate concern. Should the world ever remain hostage to India's political gimmickry?

Sharif Wants Strengthened Parliamentary System

BK1203131193 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 1 Mar 93 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, 28 Feb—Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif declared here on Sunday [28 February] that if the Parliamentary system was to be practised, strengthened and established on a sound footing, the Eighth Amendment in the Constitution must go as the repeal of this Amendment was a prerequisite to establish the authority of the Parliament and the mandate given to the Prime Minister by the people of Pakistan.

The Prime Minister was informally talking to newsmen in the Parliament House building after addressing the Senate. He said the provisions in the amendment about Islamic aspects would remain intact.

Replying to a question the Prime Minister hoped to present the bill to repeal the Eighth Amendment even before the next session of the National Assembly which is scheduled from 22 April.

The Prime Minister said he had instructed his Law Minister as the head of a special committee to look into the issue. The Minister, he said, would consult constitutional experts, other political leaders and political parties outside the parliament. The Committee headed by the Law Minister, he said, will submit its report and then "we would finally decide about the issue."

The time has come, remarked the Prime Minister, that we take into consideration all aspects related to the Eighth Amendment and have a thorough debate on them. The Prime Minister cited the example of Great Britain and India where the parliamentary form of governments were practised in letter and spirit. "You have to concede all powers to the Parliament to run a truly parliamentary form of government which was different from the presidential form," the Prime Minister said. He said he was happy to notice the building up of a national consensus on the undoing of the Eighth Amendment. This, he said, was evident from the press reports, comments and the statements issued by political leaders.

Nawaz Sharif said being a firm believer in the parliamentary form of government, he strongly felt that if the Eighth Amendment was done away with, the democratic parliamentary system of government would be strengthened and the national economy flourish. The parliamentary system, he said, would lead to the prosperity of the nation and ensure justice to the people of Pakistan. Earlier in his address to the Senate, the Prime Minister said if the parliamentary form of government was to be practised in the country, it had to be established firmly and practised meaningfully. He said he was happy to see that a majority of members of Parliament had declared their support for the parliamentary system and for establishment of the democracy on sound footing.

The Prime Minister who stood up to reply to the provocative and hard hitting speech made by Senator Tariq Chaudhary supporting the 8th Amendment and criticism of the government's policies, forcefully defended his actions both in the economic and social fields.

He said due to the economic policies pursued by his government, the country registered a growth rate of 6.5

p.c. [percent] making Pakistan the fifth country in the world registering a high growth.

The Prime Minister said the yellow cab scheme he had initiated would go a long way in eliminating unemployment in the country. He said a similar scheme would soon be launched for the purchase of tractors to boost up the agriculture sector. He said the Haris [landless peasants] in the province of Sindh who are given 16 acres land per family, would be protected fully. A group of four Haris, he said would be allocated a tube-well to provide them irrigation facilities. Nawaz Sharif said, neighbouring India which could achieve just 2.4 p.c. growth rate has been forced to copy the economic policies introduced by his government.

The Prime Minister said "had we introduced present policies 20 to 25 years ago, we would have become Asian Tiger." He stated "we are surely late but if we keep on marching with our present policies, we will excel our neighbours within few years and they will not be able to catch us."

He maintained that the privatisation of banks as well as government control units have also yielded better results including privatisation of a portion of bureaucracy. [sentence as published] Moreover, the policy of privatisation has enabled the government to save lot of funds which were being used to make up the losses of the nationalised industry, he added.

The Prime Minister said the Motorway would link all parts of country from Khyber Pass to Gwadar and generate heavy economic activity. He said a portion of the Gwadar Port had already been constructed and was waiting its inauguration.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said for the first time in the country's history loans worth billions of rupees have been advanced to the poor, low income and white collared to have respectable employment.

Under the transport policy (self employment scheme), the Premier said billions of rupees in loans have been advanced to unemployed youth to get a yellow cab, mini bus, wagon, truck or any other vehicle according to the specification.

Army Chief Leaves on 5-Day Visit to China

BK1003143293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Text] Chief of the Army Staff General Abdul Wahid left Rawalpindi for Beijing on a five-day goodwill visit to China. During his stay, Gen. Abdul Wahid will meet high-ranking civil and military officers. He will also visit some formations of the People's Liberation Army.

French Ministry Softens Stand on Submarine Deal

BK0903152393 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 9 Mar 93 p 12

[Text] Karachi: There are strong indications that a change of stance by the French finance ministry on financing a submarine sale to Pakistan will help the deal go through. The main contractor DCNTs offer to sell three Agosta-90 submarines at a credit facility upto 80 percent of the contract price was earlier reportedly turned down by the French ministry, jeopardising the deal.

In a letter French Defence Minister Pierre Joxe has said that Pakistan's order of three submarines with the shipbuilders in Cherbourg had reached a state of precise details, and that a team from French finance ministry would arrive in Islamabad soon.

"I am absolutely convinced that we will quickly reach an agreement with Pakistan on the financing of these three submarines, he said.

On the credit offered for the submarine deal, the French shipyard had proposed an interest rate of 8.1 percent per annum, which was to be paid over seven years. The total price of the package was US $830 million.

On the other hand, the Chinese offer to sell three S-20 submarines at a cost of US$514 million with an interest rate of 7.5 percent on the credit facility was lower than the French tender. It was also way below the Swedish offer to sell three A-19 Gotland submarines at a fixed price of US$795 million, the financing arrangement spread over a period of 13 years with an interest of 8 pc [percent] per annum.

Because the Pakistan Navy is interested in building submarines in Pakistan, the French proposed partial construction of one of the subs at the naval dockyard in Karachi after its infrastructure facilitics were upgraded. The Swedish also offered to transfer technology so that Pakistan could undertake indigenous construction of submarines.

A team of experts from Kockum visited the dockyard and estimated that it needed an investment of US$21 million for partial construction of A-19 subs or US$45 million for their complete construction.

Ironically, the Pakistan Navy's proposed submarine acquisition and construction programme had been effectively scuttled by local and foreign elements in the late fifties.

There have been some allegations of kickbacks in the French submarine deal. Taking serious notice of it, the prime minister formed a committee on March 24, 1992, to directly negotiate with the manufacturers of submarines. The committee—headed by AGN Kazzi—has evaluated all the three offers.

The supporters of the French submarine say that Agostas are an ideal purchase because the Pakistan Navys already owns two—Hushmat and Hurmat—and has a great deal experience on them. Both of these submarine were made for South Africa but could not be delivered because of the mid-1978 UN ban on arms sales to the African country, and were later acquired by the Pakistan Navy.

The new submarines are similar in design to the older Agostas which Pakistan already has, but have a more technologically advanced radar and better sonar equipment. They can also be fitted with tube-launched Harpoon missiles in place of the standard Exocet SM-39 missiles.

The Chinese and the Swedish submarines boast new design, their construction having been started in the late 1980's.

However, some defence experts believe that the sensors and weapons on the A-19 submarines are superior to its French counterpart. A Pakistan Navy delegation recently visited Sweden and tested the equipment on board an A-19.

Leaving aside the superiority and inferiority debate, the acquistion of three submarines—whether they are French, Swedish or Chinese—is a major sign to counter the Indian naval threat. "With a strong fleet of submarines, the Pakistan Navy can help declare an exclusion zone around the Indian ports to cousnter the enemy's naval superiority," said an analyst. "And the bigger the Indian surface fleet, the larger the number of targets it would provide to the Pak Navy.

Indian Admiral Nandkharni's suggestion for a freeze on the acquisition of submarines is a non-starter. According to military experts, such a freeze can only become effective if there is a reduction in Indian surface vessels.

As one defence expert put up: "We wouldn't need to expand our submarine arm if the Indians stopped expanding their navy."

Six New Military Bases To Be Set Up in Sindh

BK1003142793 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN OBSERVER in English 10 Mar 93 p 1

[Text] The Pakistan govenment has decided to set-up six new military cantonments in different parts of Interior Sindh to strengthen the National Defence and to monitor terrorists activities infiltering from Indo-Pak border.

Highly informed sources confided to the PAKISTAN OBSERVER that the recent activities of RAW [Research and Analysis Wing] trained Indian agents who have been involved in bomb blasts, murders and kidnapping incidents in urban as well as rural areas of the Sinh province has increased during the past few years.

Ever since the Army was deployed in Sindh to carry out operation clean-up it had gathered proof that RAW was sponsoring these activities in an attempt to mirror that Pakistan Army had failed to bring normalcy.

The RAW activities have also increased following Pakistan's government decision to reduce Indian consulate's staff in Karachi bringing the number down from 120 to 20 only. This decision had infuriated the Indian government and there had been a very sharp reaction from New Delhi's External Ministry. The RAW agents have not restricted to their activitiy to Sindh alone. There have been reports that they have operated in some parts of the Saraiki belt including Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Kanganpur, Rahimyar Khan and Sadqabad in Punjab and certain areas in the frontier province.

Defence observers when contacted by this correspondent said that there was a dire need to strengthen defence capabilities in Sindh where vast border area with India was vulnerable and RAW has been taking undue advantage of this weakness. These observers did not disclose in which part of Sindh new cantonments would be set-up. However, Panu Aqil Cantonment was constructed in late 80s and was now fully commissioned.

Asked if Indian agents were entering Pakistan via Torkham border in the garb of refugees, these observers did not rule out the possibility saying strict monitoring was being done in catch hold of such elements.

Meanwhile, the Sindh government is making arrangements to allocate required land for construction of six new cantonments. Surveys have already been conducted and efforts are being made to construct proposed cantonments away from populated areas.

Scientist Lauds Khan's Support for Nuclear Program

BK0903143993 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 9 Mar 93 p 1

[Text] Islamabad: Pakistan's nuclear wizard, A.Q. Khan, said here on Monday that he was "one of the great admirers of Ghulam Ishaq Khan who not only is a man of intagrity but is the person in charge of our nuclear programme for the past 16 years."

Talking at this high security residence here, the scientist insisted that during the successive regimes of Bhutto, Zia and Benazir, the President provided "unflinching moral and material support to our programme as Chairman WAPDA [Water and Power Development Authority], Governor State Bank of Pakistan, Secretary Finance, Secretary General Defence and later as the Finance Minister and President. I have serious doubts if we had achieved what we achieved if he were not around."

A.Q. Khan was approached by this correspondent after finding that he had an hour long meeting with the President on Monday. He was to be approached because "THE NEWS" had learnt from highly reliable sources that taking advantage of tensions between President and the Prime Minister, certain elements were busy digging government archieves to establish that GIK [Ghulam Ishaq Khan] had opposed Pakistan's quest for nuclear technology from "conservative economic angles" as an old fashioned "financecrat".

A high grade source rather insisted that the President was provided with a "for eyes only" report on the matter two days ago by the sensitive information collectors.

Dr. Qadeer, however, categorically denied that his meeting had any thing to do with our nuclear programme or political fall out of the same in this interesting year where the presidential and prime ministerial camps were already on a war path.

He insisted that he went to Aiwan-e-Sadr "only to discuss the issues related to the GIK Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology".

He went there along with Prof Javed Leghari who is to be appointed at the said institute. "We then discussed the question of appointing a rector at the said institute." He revealed that a "vary emminent professor of foreign origin has accepted the position of rector at the said institute." He, however, was not willing to divuige the name of the rector to be.

Doctor said that the GIK Institute would start operating from October 1 this year. Initially, there will be 125 to 130 students admitted to the faculties of Mechanical Engineering, Metallurgy, Computer Sciences, Electric Engineering, Applied Physics and Mathematics and Humanities. The institute is to be run by the non-governmental Society for the Promotion of Engineering and Technology as the Executive Director.

Dr Qadeer did not like the suggestion that the Institute had been named to glorify Ghulam Ishaq Khan and had to say that "I personally proposed his name because for the past 16 years GIK was the man in charge of our nuclear programme which was conceived by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto."

In a very emotional tone he said that "I am not in the habit of talking about politics and political personalities. Still, I was telling people, even during Zia's time that God may forgive every sin and weakesses of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto only because he imagined Pakistan's nuclear programme. Similary, I have to say this about Ghulam Ishaq Khan that it was because of his integrity that we could achieve what we achieved."

He said that during Bhutto and Zia's periods "there were people from within the ruling circles who would recommand scrapping of our programme. But GIK strongly advised the contrary".

"Nation," that wizard said while raising his voice, "owes thanks to Ghulam Ishaq Khan. And my [word indistinct] the proposed institute to his name is but a small expression of gratitude to his person to keep his name alive."

Dr. Qadeer maintained a rigid silence when asked about the "current pressures on our nuclear programme". He, however, had to say in aggressive terms that "Ghulam Ishaq Khan has never gave in and he never will because he had the integrity."

When pressed a lot to respond to the claim made by the former prime minister in an interview with an American network that she was kept in the dark regarding our nuclear programme he just posed a counter question: "How can you keep any chief executive in the dark about any affairs of state?"

Sri Lanka

Tamil Parties Reject Peace Plan as 'Utter Farce'

BK1103115093 Hong Kong AFP in English 1108 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] Colombo, March 11 (AFP)—A parliamentary panel Thursday proposed an Indian style administration to end Sri Lanka's ethnic bloodletting but Tamil legislators rejected the offer as an "utter farce."

The Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) was unanimous that there should be greater devolution of power but turned down a key territorial demand by Tamils to keep the northern and eastern provinces united as one administrative unit.

In an interim draft, the PSC told its members that a majority of legislators agreed that devolution of functions would be on lines similar to those found in the Indian constitution.

However, a Tamil MP charged that what was proposed was in fact a "watered down version" of the Indian constitution without powers over land, law and order given to administrative units and said it was unacceptable.

"We totally reject these proposals. It is totally incorrect to compare what is offered with the Indian model. I don't know why the chairman took three months to prepare this bloody report," the MP said.

He said there was also no recognition of distinct lingusitic regions found in the New Delhi model. He accused the PSC of trying to take over the concessions Tamils have already won under a 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka peace accord.

A seven-party Tamil alliance was planning a formal response to the PSC draft report and would come up with their own report as a minority dissent within the PSC, another Tamil MP, who did not want to be named, said.

The PSC comprising legislators from both opposition and government ranks was appointed in August 1991 to hammer out a consensus solution to the island's long drawn ethnic strife which claims a daily death toll. The PSC held 43 meetings since its inception but failed to reach a compromise acceptable both to the Sinhalese majority and minority Tamil and Muslim communities.

Thursday's PSC meeting, the first since December, ended inconclusively with the chairman Mangala Moonesinghe adjourning deliberation till March 26 when four more proposals are expected to be discussed.

Analysts on both sides of Sri Lanka's ethnic divide have said that the failure of the PSC to reach agreement would only strengthen the hand of the dominant Tamil separatist group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Both government figures as well as opposition politicians have described the PSC as the last chance for peace in Sri Lanka where Tamil guerrillas are leading a 20-year-old separatist campaign.

Tamils, including the LTTE, have insisted on keeping the northern and eastern provinces as one unit where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated.

The area accounts for about one third of the total land mass of the island and Sinhalese have resisted.

The LTTE, which is the main military protaganist in the costly civil war in the island's northeast, has stayed away from the PSC despite repeated appeals by the government.

Commandos Say 22 LTTE Members Killed in Operation

BK1203142393 Hong Kong AFP in English 1218 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] Colombo, March 12 (AFP)—Elite army commandos killed at least 22 Tamil Tiger guerrillas and wounded another 17 during a three-day search-and-destroy operation in eastern Sri Lanka, the military said here Friday.

Troops smashed an abandoned base of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the jungles of Thoppigala in coastal Batticaloa District, a military statement said.

"According to information available, 22 terrorists are believed killed and around 17 injured," the statement said.

Artillery guns and aircraft attacked LTTE targets causing heavy destruction to rebel facilities, a military source said, adding that most Tiger casualties were from long-range fighting.

"We do not have any casualties on our side except for a soldier who was bitten by a mad fox. We did not take any losses because we took them completely by surprise," a military officer in the area said by telephone.

Security forces also recovered a four-wheel drive vehicle from the guerrillas.

The LTTE is fighting to establish an independent state called Eelam in the northeast for Sri Lanka's two million Tamil minority community which is concentrated in the region. Thousands have died in the bitter fighting.